

frostburn

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by [luckylkeyou](#)

Summary

The idea of a snowy getaway in the mountains is a tantalizing one to George, who has long since grown tired of the nauseating heat of Florida. The opportunity to escape from his duties as a content creator, as well as escape from the unpleasant weather he has still yet to grow accustomed to, reels him in easily enough to have him agreeing as soon as the suggestion is brought up. Plane tickets are bought, winter gear is gathered and packed into overflowing suitcases, and so they sit and wait for the time to arrive.

Then Sapnap flakes at the last minute.

Which leaves George stuck in a remote cabin with Dream, his poorly repressed emotions, and a severe underestimation of the snowfall in Vermont.

Notes

HIHI EVERYONE HAPPY NEW YEAR!! ive returned to ao3 bearing this monstrosity

this is a fic i wrote for a secret santa im participating in!! it is written for my lovely angel steph <33 you wouldn't believe the excitement i had for this lol i wrote the entirety of this in exactly a month which might not sound impressive to fast writers but is insane for me HAHAHA i had so much fun writing it for her and including all the things i know she likes, and i hope yall will enjoy it too! let me know what you think :)

Since moving to Florida, George has missed the cold.

He has had to get used to the constant feeling of *too warm*, flushed skin and damp clothes, and the annoying realization that nearly his entire wardrobe consists of hoodies. The constant humidity was difficult to adjust to in the summer, and the gross feeling of a blanket of wet air enveloping him every time he set foot outside was uncomfortable, to say the least. Even in the winter, George has yet to see the temperature fall below 10°C. Or whatever that is in Fahrenheit.

The only solace he finds from the suffocating heat is in the cool, air conditioned home he shares with Dream and Sapnap. He does miss the cold weather of London, but air conditioning being a commonplace in almost every household is something he thinks he can get used to. That still doesn't change the fact that every time he steps outside, an intense gust of hot air slams into him and all he wants to do is slink back inside and rid himself of the hot, sticky feeling.

George tries to avoid the heat, but even in the cool interior of their house, he can't avoid the occasional warmth of a heated argument with Sapnap over something stupid, or the fire that Dream lights inside him whenever he beams a joyful grin at him from over the dinner table.

Life with Dream and Sapnap here in Florida is different. He wants to say that nothing has changed since they moved in together, but that's far from the truth. Sapnap is more rowdy and unfiltered compared to his personality online, and Dream—well, it's different.

He's not sure what it is about Dream. He's both the same as he's always been, and also something strange, something more.

Maybe the electric sensation that sings through his veins every time Dream brushes up against him is a result of thousands of miles of distance being removed in an instant, maybe his brain just isn't used to the vibrancy that is Dream—real life Dream, not a disembodied voice over a crackly speaker or a text that buzzes through George's phone at some ungodly hour in the night. Maybe the inability of his body to get used to the sticky year-round heat of Florida after growing up in the UK is akin to the inability of his brain to comprehend that his best friend is living and breathing next to him, and the days of long-distance friendship are no more.

It's nostalgic, in a sense, the memory of cold winter days chatting with Dream over a game of Bedwars with no stream to listen in on them, no audience to account for. He tends to lump those two experiences together in one memory tethered to his mind—the cold winters of London and the obnoxious giggling between the two of them on Discord, separated by a screen. George wonders if it's silly to feel nostalgic for something that was a reality less than a few months prior, or for someone he sees every single day.

If George were to categorize his life into two sections, the first would be the chill of London nights and a wish to not be an ocean apart from his best friend, and the second would be the sickening heat of Florida and his wish fulfilled.

...

It's one day after spending far too long in the late afternoon sun when George darts back in the house and sprawls out on the cool hardwood, that Sapnap proposes the idea.

“A cabin?” George questions, lifting his head from his place on the sweet, sweet cold floor and brushing his sweaty bangs off his forehead.

Sapnap nods enthusiastically as he flops down on the couch a few feet away from George, kicking his feet up on the coffee table. “Yeah dude, my uncle owns a cabin in Vermont. I used to go there when I was a kid, we would spend winter break there with my family.”

George rolls over onto his stomach to cool off that side of his body as well. He can hear the short chuckle at his antics that Dream gives him from across the room. When George speaks again, his voice is muffled by the wooden floorboards that are smushing his nose.

“I get the feeling that this is some murderous plan you’ve come up with, to bring me and Dream out to a cabin in the middle of nowhere and kill us.”

Sapnap barks out a laugh at that. “What, you think I’m gonna kill you and make a wall mount out of you like a deer?”

George lifts his head from the floor and shoots Sapnap a dubious look. “That’s not what I had in mind, but now I’m kind of concerned that *that* was the first thing your brain went to.” George’s eyes dart across to see Dream laughing at the two of them bickering like siblings.

Sapnap’s eyes narrow. “If that’s not what you had in mind, then I want to hear what methods you assume I’d have to kill you and Dream.”

George heaves a breath and pushes himself up from his limp sprawl on the floor, sufficiently cooled enough for now, although he’s sure his face is still pink. He simply ignores Sapnap and fishes his phone out of his pocket, tapping to get to the weather app. *Orlando*, it reads, 80°F. George has hardly a clue what that means, but he knows it’s too damn hot for winter.

“How cold did you say it gets in Vermont?” He asks.

“Well, I know it regularly gets below freezing. They get a shitton of snow up there.”

Now *that* is something that sparks George’s interest. It’s been a while since he has experienced a good snow, one that didn’t just melt once the sun rose, and he knows as long as he stays in sunny Orlando he’s not going to get one. He misses the chill of snow biting at his skin, the sting of crisp, cold air in his lungs, and the rosy flush that accompanies the cold. Maybe this would be a chance to spend a week away from the sweltering heat that clogs up his brain and melts him into a puddle of goop.

Dream suddenly speaks up, “I think it would be fun. We can make snowmen and have Twitter rate which one is the best. Plus,” he takes note of George’s sweaty appearance, “I think George is tired of the weather here.”

George rolls his eyes as if to say *obviously, idiot*. Dream’s mouth quirks up in a smile, and George feels the need to recline on the chilled hardwood again.

“You down for it, George?” Dream asks.

Maybe the cold Vermont weather will freeze up the unwelcome molten feeling that stirs inside him when Dream calls his name.

“Sure, sign me up.”

...

Two weeks before they're set to leave for their trip, Sapnap breaks the news.

"I'm sorry, dude, my parents need me to come back to Texas that week. They literally just told me about this last night, and if I had known sooner I would've let you guys know."

George pretends to wail into his bowl of cereal he's eating for breakfast at 2pm, breaking the morose mood Sapnap had created with his negative news into laughter. He can still see the slight frown on Sapnap's face, though.

"It's okay, we can just reschedule for another time," Dream offers.

"If we wait too long, it's gonna be spring and the snow will have melted. You know, you guys can still go without me," Sapnap says.

Mouth full of cereal, George raises his eyebrows, nonverbally encouraging him to continue.

"If I can't go, I don't see why you two have to miss out as well. We've already got the plane tickets booked and everything, it would be more of a hassle than not for all of us to cancel. I don't have to leave until the day after our flights, so I could even take you guys to the airport. Plus, my uncle said he's been up to the cabin already to get it ready for us. Y'know, firewood and that shit."

Dream seems to mull the idea over for a second. Eventually, he says, "That sounds alright to me. I'll feel bad you're missing out, but me and George can still go."

George stares into his cereal, but he can feel their eyes on him. If Dream says it's okay with him, that just means George should agree as well. But a swelling sense of worry builds in his gut at the knowledge that if he agrees, he will be spending a week alone with Dream. It sounds ridiculous when he thinks about it. It will be fine, he tells himself. Being alone with Dream for a week isn't going to be any different than their one on one Discord calls they've had hundreds of times before. That also sounds ridiculous.

George hears Dream clear his throat and vaguely realizes he has probably taken too long to answer the question.

"That's alright with me. Me and Dream will have so much more fun without you, Idiotnap" he adds on in a half-assed comedic effort. It seems to work, though, judging by the giggle Dream lets out at what is probably the least creative insult George has thrown at Sapnap yet.

Sapnap swears at him in good nature and walks off.

"So, me and you, huh?" Dream muses.

George nods. He has finished all his cereal by now, but he has yet to swallow the lump that has grown in his throat.

...

The more George thinks about it as the departure date approaches, the more he is second-guessing

his decision.

Sapnap informs him and Dream that the cabin is in a remote location, and if they want any kind of wifi signal it's going to be spotty at best, nonexistent at worst. He offers it as a chance for the two of them to log out for a while, to ignore the volatile environment that is the internet and catch a break from it all, if just for a short while. It sounds nice, and he knows that it would be especially good for Dream.

He can't even count how many times he has caught Dream scrolling through Twitter or Reddit looking at criticism of himself, and no matter how much Dream says it doesn't get to him, they both know it can't be healthy. He'll catch Dream with his brows furrowed and lip tucked between his teeth and instantly *know*, his fingers will twitch with the urge to swipe his phone out of his hand and turn it off, but he doesn't. He's not brave enough to point out Dream's self-destructive tendencies in fear of giving himself away, but it's a slippery slope. Care too little and he's an absent friend, care too much and things become too intimate. That's what he frets about the most regarding this trip—somehow revealing too much.

He's not sure what has become of him since he moved to Florida. He thinks a wire got kinked inside his brain when he saw Dream in person for the first time. Something got twisted, frayed, and now his brain is spitting off sparks and sending misfired signals when he looks at Dream, it *has* to be some kind of malfunction, because this can't be normal. George doesn't feel normal, hasn't felt normal since he heard Dream's laughter resounding in the small interior of his car as he was driven to his new home after landing at the airport.

He tries to chalk it up to the foreign experience of meeting someone he has only ever known online in person. Seeing Dream's face turn red as he wheezed at some stupid joke George cracked, not having to hear his voice through headphones, and having the ability to touch him and be in his presence felt like the most electric moment in his life, and then the sparks faded into regularity.

It felt like everything, it felt like nothing, and then it just felt right.

The first day was like a fever dream, but as George got everything moved in and set up it fell into normalcy, or what he thinks is considered his new normal. But even after the excitement fades, George has been left with a new, confusing energy in his body every time Dream is near. It's like the low humming of a fluorescent bulb, something he can tune out with some difficulty but constantly lingers. He feels the bulb burn brighter, the hum inside him vibrating his bones when Dream throws an arm over his shoulder, or knocks on his door and asks if he wants dinner, or calls his name in that one way he always does but somehow feels so much more different in person.

It's new. It's disgusting. It's lovely. It frightens him.

So George does what George does best. He pushes it to the side, busies himself with his YouTube projects and Twitch streams, brainstorms real life content to create with Sapnap, tries his damndest to shake off the low thrumming in his veins, in his blood, every time Dream comes near.

He worries that being alone in a cabin with Dream for a week will leave him with no way to escape, and the electric hum in his frayed wires will spark out of control and set him alight.

...

“You all packed up, George?”

George looks up from shoving his clothes haphazardly into his suitcase to see Dream standing in his doorway, leaned against the frame as he observes George struggling to zip his suitcase shut.

“Yeah, just about,” he grunts, pushing down harder on the lid to compress his heavy winter gear enough to get the zip to close.

Dream chuckles. “Need any help?”

George shakes his head adamantly. With one last valiant tug, he gets rewarded with the loud, high pitched noise of the zipper as it finally slides its way home. He looks up at Dream once more, chest heaving slightly from the exertion of fighting with his suitcase. He really needs to work out more.

“See? I can handle it.”

Dream raises his hands defensively, saying, “I never said you couldn’t. It’s kinda fun watching you struggle, though.”

George hops to his feet and wheels his suitcase out of his room, Dream right on his tail. He doesn’t need help, but Dream still loads their bags up into the back of the car himself, telling George to go double check the house for things he could’ve missed. It’s characteristic of Dream to be thorough, something George appreciates as he spots his phone charger still sitting on his desk.

He bites his cheek when he remembers that this is supposed to be a week to unplug from the internet. But he still ends up stuffing the cord into his pocket and hoping it doesn’t get tangled. George isn’t going to be on his phone the whole time, he’s going to take this opportunity to appreciate life away from the demands of content creation. A week with Dream without the buffer of an audience, or Sapnap, or their daily obligations. Unadulterated quality time.

Don’t overthink it, he tells himself.

George hurries back into the garage where Sapnap is busy buckling himself into the driver’s seat and hooking his phone up to the bluetooth stereo. George runs and hops in the passenger seat, calling out *Shotgun!* before Dream even has the chance to shut the trunk. He begrudgingly slides in the backseat behind George, complaining about the legroom in Sapnap’s car.

“You should be more worried about the legroom on the plane,” Sapnap points out as he puts the car in reverse, earning a groan from Dream and a laugh from George.

“I told you we should’ve upgraded our seats, George,” Dream grumbles behind him. George can hear the pout in his voice. It’s endearing.

He shakes his head to get rid of that thought. He’s not really sure if finding his best friend *endearing* is considered an intrusive thought, but the thoughts cause him to be aware of the way he views Dream, and it is entirely unwanted, therefore intrusive.

He used to wonder why it wasn’t the same with Sapnap, because Sapnap is also his best friend. He hasn’t been wondering much lately, but he likes to pretend he still does. Pretend he’s still dense. He knows better, and he’s aching aware of that fact right about now as he nervously drums his fingers on the center console after catching Dream’s eye in the rearview mirror.

Repression is a friend he knows well. George can just turn a blind eye and pretend everything is normal. Because it is.

“Excited to spend a week *alone* with me, Dream?” George asks when he meets eyes with Dream again through the reflection. Cover it up with humor, it’ll be okay.

George can see the crinkle of Dream’s eyes. “You’re an idiot,” he laughs, shaking his head.

“You two behave while I’m gone,” Sappap warns, pulling out onto the freeway to make his way to the airport.

...

“I’m sweaty,” George complains.

Dream rolls his eyes as he gets himself buckled into his seat, legs wriggling as he tries to get in a somewhat comfortable position for the flight. George thinks he looks like a mime in a box.

“I already checked the weather for when we arrive, and you’re gonna thank me for convincing you to layer up. It would be annoying to have to dig out jackets and shit once we land.”

George hums quietly, not offering much of a response because he knows Dream is right. But the plane is stuffy, and George likes complaining. He can’t wait until they actually land and he gets to feel the sweet subzero chill again. He misses winter, and Florida seems to have only two seasons which include extremely hot, and less hot but still hot. Maybe he can throw a snowball at Dream’s head.

“Have you ever seen snow before?” George asks.

“Yeah, a handful of times when I’ve gone out of state to visit family. Just never in Orlando, obviously.”

George buckles his seatbelt and tightens it till it fits snugly around his waist, tuning out the sound of the pilot over the speaker announcing the details of their flight. He leans his head back, and even though it’s not even noon yet, he thinks he might take a nap on the flight. Regularly going to sleep at around four in the morning means his body is used to still being in bed around this time. When he was in London his sleep schedule was all kinds of messed up, and it seems to have gotten worse since he moved to Orlando, but he likes to say that he’s working on it. His eyes lull shut and he thinks he might drift off until Dream speaks again.

“Are you already falling asleep?” he chuckles.

George cracks one eye open to glare at him. “Maybe.”

“C’mon, you sleep all the time. I wanted to talk to you on the ride,” he says petulantly. George’s face twists into a mock look of disgust but his chest feels a little warm.

“If I could handle a ten hour flight from London to Orlando without having someone to pass the time, you can handle a couple hours by yourself while I sleep.”

“*George*,” Dream complains, dragging out the syllables in his name.

George scoffs, “Are you a dog with separation anxiety? You’ll have me all this week, not talking on a five hour plane ride isn’t going to kill you.”

“You’re such an idiot,” Dream mumbles.

The lights dim in the cabin and the plane starts rolling across the concrete, preparing for takeoff. George shifts in his seat, trying to get in a position that won’t leave him with a stiff neck when he wakes up.

Apparently Dream notices what he’s doing, because he suddenly says, “You can lean against me if you want. Just don’t drool.”

George bites his tongue and keeps his eyes shut. He finally replies after a moment with a, “No thanks.” Sleeping with his head craned to rest against Dream’s shoulder would surely leave his neck sore. That’s the only reason he’s opposed to the idea.

“Suit yourself. I’ll just be over here alone, without anyone to talk to...”

George tries to remain unimpressed, but he knows his traitorous lips are turning up in a smile at Dream’s melodrama. The rumble of the plane as it takes off into the sky serves as a calming white noise for his slumber.

...

When they arrive, it’s already nearing sundown. George has never liked how early the sun starts to fall during the winter.

They collect their luggage from the carousel and then step out of the airport. George is instantly hit with a gust of crisp winter air, so cold it tears through his clothes and stings his lungs when he breathes. It’s fantastic.

“Jesus Christ,” Dream says as he tugs his coat around him a little bit tighter, each word coming out in a puff of fog.

George is suddenly grateful for Dream’s foresight to wear clothes made for the cold climate. They could definitely use a few more layers, but they’ll be on their way to the cabin shortly.

“What car did Sapnap say his uncle drives?” George asks, peering out at the cars parked in front of the airport, waiting to pick up passengers. His eyes begin to water slightly at the strong winds.

“Some kind of black SUV. Said he’s got a tail light out.”

George spots a black car further down the drive, only one red light shining on the left side of the bumper. “C’mon, I see it.” He tightens his grip on his suitcase handle and ushers Dream down to the car.

George carefully walks up to the passenger side door and peers inside. The window suddenly rolls down and a man’s voice says, “You two Nick’s friends?”

Dream stutters out a response of affirmation, teeth chattering just slightly. He tells them to pop the trunk and put their suitcases in, which they do as quickly as possible so they can finally climb into the warmth of the car. With their luggage haphazardly tossed in the back and the two of them safely buckled in their seats, they introduce themselves to Sapnap’s uncle and make polite small talk as he puts the car in drive and heads for the cabin.

Dream rubs his hands together to warm them up as he chats with the man. He's still shivering slightly, but George thinks he looks good with his cheeks and nose blushed a rosy pink from the cold. George quickly looks away and stares down at his hands, picking at a frayed thread on his sleeve.

Keep the staring to a minimum, he reminds himself.

He has little self control, he realizes, when he betrays himself to look up again and gaze at Dream's red lips and windswept hair and bright grin.

George supposes he'll have to come to terms with the fact that he's weak, and every second spent with Dream chips away at his walls even more. Maybe he should've listened to the little part inside his brain telling him that this was a bad idea, but he's past the point of no return now.

...

The road to the little cabin in the woods is a treacherous one, icy and hardly traveled, but they make it in one piece.

George thanks Sapnap's uncle for driving them while Dream grabs their luggage from the trunk and carries it inside. He bids the two of them farewell, and George watches as the single tail light disappears out of view, leaving him with only the yellow light of a lamp leaking through the blinds. He hurriedly follows Dream inside.

The interior is all wooden, warm and rustic. There's electricity, thankfully, and it seems the heat must have been turned on prior to their arrival so they don't have to worry about waiting for it to kick on. George toes off his snowy boots in the doorway, then carefully explores the cabin.

There's a living room with a couch seated in front of a black wood-burning stove, logs of already chopped firewood placed carefully nearby for easy access. The kitchen is small but quaint, with a small circular breakfast table accompanied by four chairs, and a gas range to cook with. George was told that there would be various groceries stocked in the fridge and pantry, and with a quick peek he confirms that it's true. He finds himself grateful at how courteous Sapnap's relatives have been.

As he walks around he finds three bedrooms, inconspicuously dropping his luggage in the room with the biggest bed, preemptively claiming it as his. He flicks on the bedside lamp and unzips his suitcase to grab a change of clothes to sleep in. Behind him, he hears gentle socked footsteps walk into his room.

"This is a lot nicer than I expected," Dream says. "And warm, which is good."

"Don't tell me you're gonna hole yourself up in the cabin the entire time. We've got to go out and make a snowman, or have a snowball fight."

Dream makes a childish groan. "I don't like being cold, but fine. Anything for you, George."

It's meant to be taken as a joke, obviously, but George knows it's true. Dream would do anything for him.

Instead of lingering on that thought, he plays along with Dream. His eyebrows raise and he coos,

“*Anything?*”

Dream splutters, “I- What? *George*, you’re so dumb.”

He just laughs at his reaction. Dream can dish out the joke flirting, but he can never seem to take it. George used to shut him down every time he made his stupid flirtatious jokes, but now he finds fun in surprising Dream when he reciprocates. George wonders sometimes what the purpose of Dream’s jokes are when there’s no audience around, none of their friends to laugh at the absurdity—he should know better, but still he lets his brain indulge in fantasy sometimes. He tries not to let himself think too long or speculate too much because he knows how rough the plummet back to reality is.

Dream leaves his room to wander around the cabin a little more. George shuts the door to change into his pajamas: sweatpants and a hoodie that he hasn’t worn in months because the weather never called for it. Maybe now he can put to use the heavier winter clothes he has had to shove back in his closet.

As he pulls the hoodie down over his head, he hears a little knock at his door.

“Yeah?”

“Can I open the door?” comes Dream’s muffled voice from outside.

George just walks over and opens the door himself, finding Dream standing there with a suspicious look on his face.

“Did you take the biggest bed on purpose?” Dream asks.

The telling grin that spreads across George’s face instantly gives him away, but he still says, “No.”

“You’re annoying. My legs are gonna hang off the bed.”

“Too bad, I’ve already chosen this one,” George says matter-of-factly. He thinks the visual of Dream being too tall and having his toes hanging off the end of the bed is rather funny.

Dream scoffs. “I’ll just sneak into your room in the middle of the night and push you out of bed so I can sleep in it.”

George’s mind instantly supplies him with the fact that his bed is more than capable of holding the both of them. He shakes his head to get rid of the thought.

“Whatever. Did you let Sapnap know we got here safely?” George asks.

Dream nods and pulls his phone out of his pocket, peering at it. “I did, but I’m not sure if it has gone through yet. I think Sapnap was right when he said that the signal out here is terrible.”

Right. Cabin in the middle of nowhere, that means no signal. Which means no internet to distract the both of them. George can’t even recall the last time he went a full week without the internet, and it seems a little daunting to be without it. Internet access has been extremely important to him ever since he became friends with Dream, but now he realizes he doesn’t even have to have an online connection to see Dream anymore. He’s right here, in front of him, and asking him if he wants to help cook dinner.

He easily agrees and follows Dream into the kitchen.

Dream is the better cook out of the two of them, so George simply follows his lead and helps him along with the process. Cutting up ingredients, measuring them out, maybe sneaking a spoonful whenever Dream isn't looking. The atmosphere is cozy, warm, and oddly domestic. He has cooked with Dream before in their own house, but something about this feels different.

He nearly chuckles aloud at this thought, but he likens it to something from a Hallmark Christmas movie, even though it's January and Christmas has already come and gone. The ambiance of the night really does feel like a movie—the warm glow from the lamps around the log cabin, the frost creeping up the windows, the way they talk to each other in a hushed tone like they're trying to not disturb the quiet winter night, even though they're the only ones for miles. In their Hallmark movie, George is the main character who moves to town with a frozen heart and thinks he can never love again, and Dream is the one who proves him wrong.

The thought is so ridiculous and cheesy, George can't suppress his giggle this time.

"What are you laughing about?"

George curbs his laughter, trying to hide his smile but he knows it still reaches his eyes. "Nothing. Just a thought I had."

Dream hums and continues stirring around the vegetables in his pan. "Penny for your thoughts?"

"Mmm, nope," George quips in that silly high-pitched voice he often uses on stream.

"There's no audience, George." Dream rolls his eyes. Something in George's stomach stirs when Dream uses his name. "You don't have to censor yourself when it's just us."

Just us.

"What if I don't want you to know?" George asks.

"I'm not going to force you to tell me. I know you like to keep things to yourself."

George bites the inside of his cheek. There's lots of things he'd like to tell Dream. But for now, they remain thoughts inside his head. It's going to cost a lot more than a penny to get them past his lips.

"I was thinking about how stupid you are," he lies.

"You're an idiot," Dream mutters under his breath, but even without looking at his face, George can hear the smile in his voice. He's gotten good at recognizing that after all these years.

...

"I finally got a text back from Sapnap," Dream says as George finishes washing up the last dish from dinner.

"It says it was sent three hours ago but it just got delivered. Loving the high speed internet they've got up here," he remarks sarcastically. "He said that he checked on the weather in our area and there's supposed to be a snowstorm tonight." George can see the way that Dream is worrying his lower lip between his teeth.

“You think it will be bad?”

“Not sure. I hope it won’t be too bad, but if the power goes out, we’ve got firewood to burn.”

“We could huddle for warmth like penguins,” George offers.

Dream looks up from his phone and laughs. “If you wanted to cuddle with me you could just say that.”

George rolls his eyes and hopes Dream can’t hear the thudding in his chest. He wouldn’t necessarily be opposed to that idea.

“I’d rather sleep in the woods and have a grizzly bear gnaw my face off than say that,” he says instead.

Dream scoffs at his ridiculousness. “Dumbass,” he mumbles. George thinks Dream could call him any kind of name he wants and he’d still feel that hot, molten sensation swimming in his gut. George thinks he might go outside in his underwear and dunk himself in the snow just to fight off the warmth on his face.

“I’m gonna go take a shower before bed,” Dream says as he walks past George out of the kitchen. He feels a little zap tingle his skin when Dream’s shoulder bumps against his, but tells himself it must’ve just been the static electricity. His cheeks get hotter. George really wants to dive headfirst into a snowbank right now.

“Okay. Don’t use all the hot water.”

...

When George leaves the bathroom, he makes sure to let Dream know that the hot water ran out halfway through his shower.

“That’s what you get for stealing the bigger bed,” Dream says.

George immediately retaliates with, “Don’t care, didn’t ask, plus ratio, plus get a real job.”

He pointedly ignores Dream’s *Hey!* echoing from the hallway as he pads into his bedroom and carefully hooks his fingers around the brass knobs of the mahogany dresser seated at the foot of the bed, searching for spare blankets. With Sapnap’s warning of the weather tonight, George thinks it’s better to be safe than sorry—an extra blanket or two won’t hurt.

He doesn’t hear Dream enter the room, doesn’t notice Dream walk up behind him until his vision goes dark as something is thrown over his head.

George immediately swings his elbow back to jab Dream in the stomach, earning a pained *oof* from him, but he doesn’t let go of what George realizes is a blanket that has been tossed over his head. George does a 180 to face him (or at least he hopes he’s facing him, he still can’t see) and with his spin the blanket gets twisted tighter as Dream fists the fabric.

“What the fuck, get your stupid blanket off of me,” George shouts.

Dream giggles and holds George in place. He fights underneath the fabric, but it has him trapped

inside. “Dream!” he protests.

He wriggles around even more, trying his hardest to get out, but Dream holds firm. “Let go, asshole!” He goes in for another punch, and despite the way the fabric restrains him, he still manages to swing and hit Dream in the chest this time. George wrestles with Dream’s strong grip on the fabric, all the while swearing while Dream just giggles in pure joy.

He should’ve expected it from all his thrashing, but he still finds himself yelping in surprise when he trips over both Dream’s feet and his own, toppling over onto Dream and sending them both thudding to the ground. George can feel Dream’s firm body practically underneath his, and in a split second he has already rolled to the side as his heart races in fear. George just has to lay there and catch his breath, the fall taking the wind right out of his lungs. As he does, his mind amplifies the sound of Dream’s laughter and the way he struggles to speak between heaving breaths. He belatedly realizes the blanket is still over his head.

His hands scramble at the suffocating fabric, untwisting and unwrapping it like he’s a mummy come back to life. He finally yanks it off his head and has to blink a couple times to let his bleary eyes adjust to the light. His head snaps to the side to look at Dream, who is still sprawled out on the floor with his hands clutching his stomach, belly laughing at him. Dream’s face is red, probably due to him fighting to keep George wound up in the blankets and then being swiftly knocked to the ground. George knows his face is red too, but for different reasons. Dream sits up to look at George properly, his laughter quieting down, but his cheeks are twitching with the urge to laugh again. It infuriates George how annoying he is and how endearing he finds it.

George can hear Dream begin a sentence, but before he can continue it, George has gathered the blanket in his hands and yanked it down on top of Dream’s head—partially as payback, and partially due to the fact George doesn’t think he can stand seeing Dream look at him like that any longer.

“Hey!” Dream shouts as he wrestles with the blanket. George takes both hands and twists it until he has his head wrapped up entirely. “George, stop!”

His heart is pounding as he finally lets go. “You’re lucky I didn’t hold you there till you suffocated.” George realizes he’s speaking through peals of laughter, little breathless giggles escaping his throat. The jackhammering of his heart must have tickled the laughter right out of his lungs, because he doesn’t know how he’s laughing right now considering the only thing running through his mind is the fraction of a second that Dream’s body was pressed against his.

Dream mirrors George’s movements from just a minute prior, yanking the twisting fabric off his head. His cheeks are flushed and his hair is a mess and it hits George like a slap to the face just how beautiful Dream is.

In a panic, he jumps to his feet to try and put some distance between himself and the occupant of his thoughts.

“You’re stupid,” George giggles nervously. He prays his anxiety bleeding through his faltering attempt to act normal isn’t as obvious as he thinks it is.

“You’re stupider,” is Dream’s eloquent retort. “I was just bringing you a blanket ‘cause I knew you were looking for one.”

George pretends to be fixing the sheets on his bed in an attempt to look busy so he doesn’t have to look at Dream. “Go away. I don’t need your blankets.”

“Fine, then.” George hears the creaking of the floorboards as Dream heaves himself upright, folding the blanket up in his arms to leave the room. “Goodnight, George,” he adds sweetly. The lump settling in George’s throat doesn’t allow him to reply.

...

As George awakens, he doesn’t know what time it is, where he is, or who he is, his mind is just screaming one word:

Cold.

His eyes peek open and he can see a faint blue glow coming from his window, from behind the blinds. It’s dim enough he assumes the sun is about to rise but hasn’t yet breached the horizon, and bright enough he realizes he can see the puffs of his breath in front of his face. A shiver racks through him.

Despite his body protesting, George peels the covers off himself and is hit with a front of ice cold air. It’s almost enough to make him yelp, but he keeps quiet. Dream might still be asleep.

He tiptoes out of his bedroom and his hands feel around the hallway in the dim light for the lightswitch, numb fingers flicking it upwards to no avail. He flicks the switch up and down a couple more times. No luck—the hall stays dark.

He feels like his body is moving in slow motion as he walks into the living room. To his surprise, Dream is there, illuminated in candlelight and kneeling in front of the wood stove. He hasn’t noticed George’s presence yet.

“Dream?” He croaks.

His head perks up at George’s voice. “Hey. Power went out from the snowstorm.”

“No way, I had no idea.” Even in the poor flickering candlelight, George can see Dream’s eyes roll.

Dream is fiddling around with some newspaper, stuffing it inside the wood stove. George can see his hands shaking as he fishes around for something on the floor next to him—a matchbox.

“Do you know what you’re doing?” George asks.

Dream curses as he drops an unlit match on the floor, fingers clumsy and uncoordinated from the cold. “I’ve never used a wood-burning stove before, so I’m kinda just winging this. But I’ve been to enough bonfires in my life to be able to figure it out.”

The match in his hand strikes against the side of the box, igniting it. George shuffles closer to get a better view of Dream tossing the match inside the stove. He watches as the flames lick at the newspaper, setting the kindling alight. Dream carefully grabs a couple logs from the stack of wood balanced against the wall, placing the smaller pieces inside first to let them catch fire before adding more.

The visibility in the room increases as the fire is stoked. George eyes the little tealight sitting on the ground next to Dream. “Where’d you find that?”

Dream follows George's gaze to see what he's asking about. "Oh, it was in one of the kitchen cabinets. There's a bunch of those little candles and some matches. When I woke up, I was walking around using my phone light to look for stuff but I realized if the power is out, I don't want my phone to die."

George opens his mouth to ask a question, but it seems like Dream has already read his mind when he says, "I texted Sapnap, like, an hour ago and it hasn't delivered. Signal's still shitty."

"That's great." George yawns, shuffling closer to the fire burning in the hearth to warm himself up and rubbing at his sleepy eyes. "It's too early to be dealing with this."

Dream hums. "Have you looked outside yet?"

George shakes his head in response, yawning again.

"Go look," Dream encourages.

It pains him to stand up and move away from the warmth of the fire, but he does so anyway, tiptoeing over to the window. It's even colder over here, he notices, wrapping one arm around his torso and using the other to fiddle with the cord of the blinds, pulling down to allow himself to see outside.

He doesn't know what he expected to see, but it wasn't a wall of pure white blocking his view. His eyes widen in disbelief, blinking once or twice just to make sure he's seeing everything properly. The snow goes up to his chest, covering over half the window. The blue light of the sunrise peeks in above the ridiculous amount of snow obscuring his view. He doesn't really want to check, but he assumes the wall of snow goes around the entire house.

"Fuck," is the only intelligent word George can think to get out.

"Looks like we're snowed in, George."

...

The wood stove works, thank god. Within an hour, the house was back to a somewhat habitable temperature, not necessarily comfortable, but not bone-chilling like before. George's fingers are still stiff and achy as he takes a second pair of socks and attempts to slip them on top of the ones he's already wearing. His extremities tend to stay cold all the time, even in the Florida heat, but this chill leaves him numb in his fingers and toes. He finds much more difficulty than he expected—the socks are too tight to fit over the ones beneath, and the elastic snaps out of his grasp so frustratingly easily. His hands tremble as they struggle to pull the socks on, still shivering despite the fact the house is significantly warmer. He feels like a bowl of spaghetti.

He likens this feeling to when you have leftover spaghetti in the fridge, chilled after lingering there all night, and you reheat it in the microwave to enjoy the next day. When you go to take a bite, the outside is warm and the inside is still cold because your shitty microwave is probably going on thirteen years by now, and then you have to stir the spaghetti around and reheat it *again* just to get it warmed up consistently all the way through.

George wonders if it's possible to stir himself around so he gets warmed up evenly instead of from the outside in. Scratch that, too macabre.

Dream peeks his head into George's room. "How are you feeling? Still cold?"

"Spaghetti," George answers.

"...Right."

He can feel Dream's eyes on him as he struggles to pull the crew sock up his ankle. The friction of the fuzzy fabric against the first sock and the fact his fingers feel like icicles increases the difficulty.

The hem of the sock slips from his clumsy grasp a third time, and Dream finally decides to intervene.

Before George realizes it, he has come next to the bed where George is planted as he fights with his socks. A warm hand gently pushes his own cold ones away, and he feels like he might faint as Dream grabs one finicky sock and pulls the tight elastic band over his foot and up his ankle, settling it into place. He can't take his eyes off Dream's big, careful hands. He grabs the other sock and pulls that one up as well.

Dream looks perfect in the soft glow coming from the window, and George is reminded that no one treats him as tenderly as Dream does.

His sweet fingers even take the time to grab the hem of George's pants that have ridden up his legs and pull them down properly. He wonders if the fire burning in the wood stove has increased in temperature in the last minute or two because his entire body suddenly feels uncomfortably hot, blood singing with pure warmth.

His fingers are still frozen and stiff, but the cold, spaghetti-like feeling of his inner core has been swiftly eliminated and replaced with comforting heat from just a thirty second interaction of Dream helping him with his damn socks. Pathetic, that's what he is.

"You looked like you were having some trouble," Dream teases, voice so low it's almost a murmur.

"Shut up. My hands are frozen." George can't look him in the eye.

Dream chuckles. "I thought you liked the cold?"

"I do when I have a warm house to return to, not when I'm shivering for hours on end," George grouses.

"Want that blanket I tried to give you last night?"

He stays silent. Then, his eyes dart up to Dream's face, where he can see the silly smile spreading. George tries to resist it, but he starts to mirror him. He ignores his mind shouting at him about how weak he is for Dream.

"Maybe..."

He doesn't say anything, but the chuckle Dream lets out screams *knew it*. He follows behind him like a puppy as they walk to Dream's room. Dream scoops it up from his messy bed and outstretches his arm, handing over the blanket. He hesitantly takes it, worried he'll suffer the same fate he did last night, but Dream takes mercy on him and gives it to him without a fight. George drapes the fabric around his shoulders like a cape.

“I’m gonna go sit by the stove and make sure it keeps burning,” Dream says.

George takes it upon himself to open all the blinds, allowing what little light spills over the top of the wall of snow to light up the house. The visibility is much better with the late morning sun than the barely-there glow of the sunrise, so they can forgo the candles for now. Dream stokes the fire a little more while George shuffles around the chilly cabin.

He ponders the idea of attempting to dig through the snow and go outside, but easily convinces himself he had better not. That would only lead to dragging snow into the cabin and letting in a concerning amount of cold air, and no matter how appealing the idea of building a snowman or having a snowball fight with Dream is, he knows he shouldn’t. Not only for the aforementioned reasons, but because he thinks if he saw Dream with his cheeks and nose red from the bite of the winter wind, he might not be able to restrain himself from kissing him senseless.

George instantly has the urge to pinch himself for thinking that. He thinks he might be going insane. Actually, he *knows* he’s going to *be* insane by the time they get out of here.

...

The day goes by not too differently than it would have if they weren’t snowed in. They cook breakfast together, and George is thankful for the fact the stove isn’t electric, all they have to do is strike a match to get the gas range to ignite. It’s much like the previous night, George following all of Dream’s instructions to help him cook since he hardly does this on his own, and when he does it doesn’t go too well. But Dream is both a good chef and a good teacher, so they cook up something worthwhile with as many perishable ingredients as they can fit in. George worries that the food in the fridge will spoil, so it’s best to use it now. He’s not a fan of drinking milk on its own, but he still downs a glass just so it doesn’t go to waste.

George learns that being alone with Dream isn’t nearly as bad as he figured it would be. He recalls dreading the trip, being so sure that he would be tense and awkward around him. It’s not to say that he hasn’t had his moments (i.e. entirely losing the ability to form coherent language when Dream had helped him with his socks), but it’s not bad. Nice, even. He enjoys it, being close to Dream with no one to observe them and no one studying their every move, and he hates that he loves it so much.

He allows himself to settle on the floor next to Dream while he stokes the fire that they’ve let burn out far too long ago. He allows himself to grab a blanket (the same one Dream smothered him in then gifted to him) and drape it around Dream’s shoulders while he pokes around at the kindling. Dream’s face nipped by the cold is pretty, but something about his features flickering in the light of the fire is a different sense of beautiful. George wants to run his hands across the stubble on Dream’s chin, feel it scrape against his own.

A shiver wracks his body, and Dream, attentive and caring, grabs one corner of the blanket and lifts it up, an obvious gesture for George to come closer. An instinctive reply jumps to his tongue, one teasing Dream, making light out of the objectively intimate nature of sharing the blanket, but he doesn’t speak it. He crawls under the warm cover, sitting closer to Dream than before, but not touching. It’s warm, it’s right.

It would’ve been safer to crack the joke, treat everything like it’s just a bit and grab a separate blanket for himself, but this is so much nicer.

They don't talk. Dream fiddles with another match, one to reignite the wood stove, and George thinks being safe is boring.

George is beginning to lose some of his inhibitions. His mind goes back to Dream's words yesterday, *You don't have to censor yourself when it's just us.*

He has learned to monitor himself, to keep his outward actions and words on a tight, controlled leash. On his Twitch streams or YouTube videos he only lets himself show what he wants people to see—call him disingenuous, but every creator needs to do it to an extent. He recalls Quackity laughing at him for how differently he acts off camera. It's not a bad thing in the content creation scene, but he has noticed there's instances off camera where he consciously checks himself, wondering if he's showing the right emotion or saying the right words. He wouldn't say it's an insecurity, more of a... safety mechanism. Stay concealed and you're safe; be open and you're vulnerable.

It's both freeing and terrifying, losing his walls when he's around Dream. It feels nostalgic, feels like before they moved in together, before they were content creators, before George had something to hide.

"Whatcha thinking about?"

Dream's words stir him from his daze. "Hm?"

His eyes twinkle in the firelight. "You were staring at me."

George turns his head away, quickly enough that it makes Dream laugh. He would be embarrassed if he didn't feel so incredibly fond.

"I just zoned out," George finally replies.

"You do that a lot."

George frowns. "Zone out?"

"Zone out staring at me."

The words in George's throat catch fire and burn up like the embers in the wood stove. The ash it leaves in his lungs makes him cough, embarrassed. "Sorry."

Dream shrugs, rolling a log around with the fire poker. The topic isn't pushed.

Instead, they talk about other things. Plans for their upcoming content, stream ideas, plugin ideas, the like. Business talk with Dream is easy—being reminded of the fact they're practically cuddled together under a blanket by the fire, however, is not.

He's staring again. As he talks to Dream, he stares.

...

For the past hour or so, George has been rooting around in the cupboards and bookshelves of the cabin, searching for anything interesting (and denying Dream's accusations of snooping). He's curious, bored, and going a little insane from being in Dream's proximity, so he doesn't see an

issue with just looking around a bit.

He reaches back into a dusty recess in the cabinet, fishing out a CD player and a couple of jewel cases with music CDs inside. He blows the dust bunnies off the player and resists the urge to sneeze. Twirling it around to inspect it, George finds it's pretty old and probably hasn't been used in quite some time. It's portable, there seems to be no cord to plug into a wall, so he uses his fingernail to pop open the plastic cover over the battery slots, amazed to find that there's batteries inside.

With how much dust is covering this thing, George's hopes of the batteries still having any charge left are pretty low, but he still presses the power button on the player anyway.

It's a pleasant surprise when the little rectangular LED screen lights up. The words on the display read *TRACK 1*. He didn't expect for there to be a CD already inside, so he pops the lid to see which one is inside, rotating the disc around so he can read it properly.

"Frank Sinatra?" comes Dream's voice from over his shoulder.

George jumps. "Don't sneak up on me like that."

"I was just wanting to see what you were looking at," Dream says. "Where'd you find this?"

George gestures to the cabinet door that is still ajar. "Up there. I'm surprised the batteries still have any charge left in them, this thing hasn't been used in a long while."

"You should play music while we make dinner," Dream suggests. George looks outside the window, noticing how the light is dimmer than before. He hadn't even realized the sun had already started to set. He must have lost track of time as he talked with Dream all afternoon, and it reminds him of their early friendship, when time would fly during their Discord calls and George would suddenly realize it's three in the morning.

Things are different with Dream, now, but some things will always stay the same.

"Are you about to get started?" George asks.

"Yeah, just added more wood to the stove to keep burning while we're busy. I'm gonna head in there, you should bring the CD player, too."

George does, gathering up the cases and the player and toting it into the kitchen. He sets it down on the counter while Dream is preparing to get started, washing his hands and gathering things from the pantry. It's canned soup tonight, not very impressive, but it's what they have on hand.

Dream seems to have found an apron that was hidden somewhere in the kitchen and is slipping it over his head and then tying it behind his back. He turns to George and spreads his arms as if to say *look!* and George has never wanted to kiss Dream more. He gives him a weak thumbs up, then makes a valiant urge to turn his attention back to the CD player instead of staring at Dream like he's already been doing all day.

"What CD should I play?" he asks.

"Just leave the Frank Sinatra one in there. My mom used to play his music when I was a kid."

George presses his finger down on the play button, and the low music starts humming from the speaker. He uses a little knob on the side to raise the volume, and the sound of brass fills the room, followed by a smooth baritone voice. It's not something George would listen to in his free time, but

it has a sort of classic charm he finds himself enjoying.

“The sun is going down,” Dream comments. “It’s gonna be dark soon. I found some more candles if you want to grab those, they’re bigger than the little tea lights I was using this morning.”

Finding the candles isn’t difficult with Dream’s instructions, so he quickly retrieves them and brings them back to the kitchen. As he lights them, he sure hopes they don’t run out of matches. He takes the candles and places them around the room so they’ll still have some light when the sun goes down, making sure to put one close to Dream so he can see what he’s doing as he struggles with the can opener.

George laughs. “Need any help?”

“No,” Dream replies, still fighting with it as it refuses to turn.

“Don’t hurt yourself,” he teases. Dream shoots him an annoyed look. George wants to kiss him.

His thoughts are beginning to get out of hand. No longer can he just shove them to the back of his mind and ignore them, every time he looks at Dream’s pretty face his brain is just screaming *kiss him, kiss him* over and over. And he’s been looking at Dream’s face a lot today. Even if it’s in the negatives outside, Dream never ceases to make him feel warm.

Dream finally gets the tin lid off the can. The soup is poured into a larger cooking pot on the stove to warm up. Now, they wait.

“You said your mom would listen to Frank Sinatra?” George asks.

Dream nods his head as he stirs the soup around. “Yeah, she’s a fan of this type of music. She and my dad would dance to it, though they haven’t done much of that in recent years.”

The image of his parents dancing together is sweet. “That’s nice. I don’t even know how to dance. I’d probably break my ankle or something.”

Dream laughs, setting the spoon down to turn his attention to George. “I’d pay to see that.”

“You want to see me hurt?”

“Oh, come on, that’s not what I meant,” Dream scoffs. “I’d probably be just as bad, if not worse. I’ve never even tried to dance before. I wasn’t really into school dances, plus I was homeschooled for a couple years, so it’s not like I ever had my first awkward leaving-room-for-Jesus prom dance.”

Just the thought makes George laugh. Dream, all dressed up in a suit and tie, dancing with a girl and struggling to keep an entire foot of distance between them and not step on her toes. He can picture a young, awkward Dream, limbs too long and feet too big and clumsy, hair falling out of the cheap hair gel and shy face flushed red. The mental image is sweet. He wishes Dream would have had the chance to go to prom, not only for the cliché experience, but the chance to see embarrassing pictures. A small smile creeps upon George’s mouth.

He ponders it more. He thinks Dream would look handsome in a suit. Hell, he *knows* he looks handsome in a suit, thanks to those promotional pictures for his music. But there’s something endearing about the picture of Dream that he creates in his head, something about someone cocky like Dream becoming bashful over something as cheesy as a slow dance. He wonders if he would do it now, if George asked. Dance with him, just so he can see if the image of Dream in his mind is anything like the real thing.

“Did you ever go to any school dances?” Dream asks.

George shakes his head. “No, I never attended any. We had some kind of prom thing, but it’s not as big of a deal as it is in the states. Dances never interested me.”

Dream tilts his head in a way that reminds George of a curious puppy cocking its head. God, he thinks he’s lost it, he’s comparing Dream to puppies now.

“You wouldn’t have gone even if someone asked you?” Dream’s voice is low, soft, just barely audible above the sound of the music.

“I didn’t say that.” George clears his throat. “It’s just that no one ever asked.”

He’s insane. He’s out of his mind. He’s delusional because he can *hear* the hopeful underlying question in his words.

Are you going to ask?

He is positive that any semblance of self-restraint he had left has long since dissolved and evaporated from his mind for him to be sounding as *obvious* as he is right now. He’s insane, out of his mind, and praying Dream has more courage than he does.

Evidently, he does.

But it backfires.

“Do you want me to ask you?”

The question rings in his ears before slithering down to his throat and strangling his vocal chords like a python. He couldn’t speak if he tried, if he even knew what to say. Of course, the question had to be phrased in that way. He couldn’t have said ‘*Do you want to dance with me?*’. No, instead he’s making George admit if he wants to even be asked the question.

Yes, *yes*, he wants Dream to. God knows he doesn’t have the bravery to ask the question himself. He wants Dream to offer his hand, lead him to the center of the kitchen, he wants Dream to step on his toes and accidentally elbow him, he wants Dream to just *know* the answer, know it from just the way George breathes and blinks and exists because it feels so embarrassingly obvious—but instead, Dream is staring at him expectantly and patiently waiting for a response. His eyebrows raise, begging the question.

Yes or no?

He gives his best half-hearted shrug and a nonchalant, “Sure.”

“You don’t sound too enthused,” Dream says, eyes shining with mirth in the candlelight.

George makes a face. It’s not like he’s going to get down on his knees and beg Dream to dance with him. He almost voices that sentiment out loud, then wisely stops himself.

Boy, that’s a thought. Himself on his knees for Dream.

He shakes his head. Not the time.

“Alright, c’mon then.” Dream stands up straight and brushes down the apron he’s still wearing. He extends one hand out to George. “May I have this dance?”

George rolls his eyes and ignores his pounding heart. “Yeah, just don’t step on my toes with your clown feet.”

A breathy chuckle leaves Dream’s lips as he takes George’s hand in his. His hand feels so *warm* as it engulfs George’s cold fingers. Just as his hands are always cold, Dream’s are always warm. Perhaps it’s the climate of sunny Florida that conditioned him that way, but regardless, George hums in content at the pleasant feeling on his frozen fingers.

“Your hands are so cold,” Dream murmurs in observation.

“Well, at the moment there is six feet of snow outside and we have no power, not sure if you’ve noticed.” George pretends to be stubborn and snarky like he always is, hoping that it will mask the anxiety oozing off of him.

“Smartass.”

For all that Dream loves to act confident and cocky, he’s quiet and reserved right now, hesitant in how he takes George’s hand and leads him into the center of the kitchen. Nervous, maybe. But surely not as nervous as George is feeling right now, blood rushing in his ears. His fingertips buzz where they touch Dream’s skin.

“Do- um, do you know where our hands go?” George’s voice comes out bare, stripped back and weak.

Dream gives a quiet laugh. “Not really, honestly. I think we hold hands like this,” He clasps George’s palm in his own and brings their joined hands out to the side, held about chest high.

That occupies George’s right hand and Dream’s left hand respectively, but their other arms dangle to the side. Dream lifts his hand like he’s about to do something with it, then immediately stops, looking at George.

“I think...” Dream starts, and George can see Dream’s Adam's apple bob before he continues speaking, “One of our hands needs to go on the other's waist?”

He phrases it like it’s a question, like he’s unsure of himself. He’s nervous, George is sure of it, but doubts it’s in the same way that he is. He figures Dream is tense because he’s not sure what he’s doing, doesn’t want to embarrass himself, probably should’ve had his first slow dance years ago, and George is nervous because he’s feeling all of that combined with the fact it’s *Dream* who he’s dancing with. The little voice sitting at the back of his mind screaming *Kiss him!* has gotten louder. God, does he want to.

“Mine or yours?” George asks, voice even weaker than before. It’s nearly a whisper, because he knows if he tries to speak any louder it’s going to crack.

In lieu of a response, Dream’s fingers gingerly encircle George’s wrist and then he starts to guide it to his own waist. It’s so unexpected and frankly frightening, George tenses before his hand can land on Dream’s waist.

Soft green eyes meet his own, and George thinks he might melt under their gaze.

“No?” Dream asks, careful.

With his lower lip drawn between his teeth and a prayer being whispered in his head for Dream to not notice his shaking, he places his hand on Dream’s waist. He’s firm but not in an unpleasant way, and George has hugged him only a handful of times, but never in his life has he wanted to fall

into Dream's arms more than right now. He's warm, he's gentle, he's grinning, George thinks he might combust.

"Sorry, I just don't know what I'm doing," George confesses.

He nearly jumps when Dream places his free hand upon George's shoulder, shifting around a little to get it at the right position. "Don't worry, I don't either. This form is probably all wrong, I'm just pretending I know where to put my hands," Dream laughs.

Every inch of his body that Dream is touching is singing with heat, so much so that he expects the thick layers of clothes between them to melt. George is just waiting for the moment Dream's hands will catch him on fire and the flames will lick across him, burning him up in seconds like kindling. He waits for it to happen, staring at his feet, refusing to make eye contact. It doesn't happen. They've been standing still, holding their position for a little too long, George realizes.

He musters up the courage to lift his head and meet Dream's gaze. Even in the shitty candlelight and the old, stained apron, he's pretty. "How do we move?" George mumbles.

"See now, *that*," Dream laughs quietly, "that I know even less about. I guess we just step back and forth?"

They begin at the same time, George moving to step to his right, and Dream stepping in the opposite direction accidentally. They stumble, and George nearly topples over as he is yanked the other way. They fall into a fit of giggles, George taking his fist and punching Dream's chest before returning back to his waist.

"Try again?" George requests. "In the same direction this time."

They move together this time, small footsteps walking themselves back and forth. The movements are clumsy and awkward, anyone could look at them and see they don't know what they're doing, really. Neither of them seem confident enough to move around the kitchen, especially not with the way Dream accidentally steps on George's toes, immediately apologizing and stepping back.

Their stiff and disjointed movements are revealing of their lack of experience, along with the juvenile way they don't make eye contact. Dream looks down at his feet to make sure he doesn't step on George again, and George is just staring over Dream's shoulder at the wall behind him. They truly do feel like an awkward teen couple at their first school dance, it's embarrassing at how he finds it so endearing.

Dream hums along to the music as they sway, readjusting his grip on George's smaller hand. The lyrics of the song ring softly in his ears as Dream sings along. He listens to Dream's voice more than he does the actual song, in all honesty. He catches phrases sung about warm smiles and tenderness, soft cheeks and lovely glows.

"You like this song?" George asks.

Dream finally looks up from where he's been staring at their feet. His face is noticeably pink, even in the low light, eyes wide like he was startled to be asked a question. He steps on George's foot again.

"Sorry, I'm sorry—"

"It's fine, Dream."

He gives George a sheepish smile. His lips are looking perfectly kissable right now. His normal

cocky behavior being replaced by something meek and soft makes George feel sickeningly fond.

They're looking at each other's faces now. George isn't any less nervous, though. Dream's eyes are warm and sleepy, the little orange reflections of candlelight swimming around in the black pools of his pupils drawing George in like he's being hypnotized. He wouldn't even have to be hypnotized to want to unwaveringly stare at Dream's face like he's doing right now. His hand feels heavy where it rests on Dream's waist, but in a solid, comforting way. In this moment, George is able to forget that they're over a thousand miles from home, snowed in, without electricity, and they've discarded the soup cooking on the stove for far too long. He has half the mind to remind Dream about it, just so they don't burn it, but he'd rather burn the soup than have to let go of Dream right now.

Just as George was studying Dream's face, he can see Dream's eyes scanning his own expression. Dream's foot steps a little too close suddenly, so George backs up to prevent his toe getting stomped again. Dream's hand on his shoulder pulls him closer, and now George can smell his cologne and see the shy grin spread across his face even better than before.

"I promise I'm not gonna step on you."

"Thanks, but I thought we were leaving room for Jesus," George jokes weakly.

Dream snorts at that, shoulders shaking as he chuckles. "I'm not religious."

"Me neither."

"That's good to know."

George wonders if it's a trick of the light, but he swears Dream's gaze dips down to his mouth for a split second, then back up to his eyes. *Fuck*, he wants to feel Dream's lips. They're still dancing, and despite how cold his hands were before, now they're starting to sweat. He doesn't know how much more of this he can handle.

"The soup is going to burn," George whispers.

"It will be fine," Dream reassures him. The unspoken words linger in his voice: *Just a little while longer.*

Just as George is starting to squirm, the music from the speaker suddenly putters out, leaving them in silence. The swaying halts abruptly, and without the music, George feels naked. It's like a record scratch moment, like a spotlight just shone down directly onto the two of them and suddenly George is so embarrassingly, painfully aware of what they were just doing. Reflexively, his hands let go of the gentle grasp they had on Dream and come to dangle hesitantly at his sides.

Dream laughs awkwardly, looking over at the now dead CD player. "I guess that's our cue to finally eat, then. Let me check the soup real quick, I'm sure it didn't burn."

It did.

...

The atmosphere over dinner was tense, but not in a bad way, per se. More like a *'Did we really just*

do that? Let's not talk about it.' way. It shouldn't be weird, right? Because it was just for practice. George knows he's going to be replaying the moment in his head for the next six months, but he cringes at the thought of Dream contemplating what they just did. The scene was sickeningly sweet at first glance, and charged with an undertone of something *more* if you looked closer.

Fuck, fuck fuck fuck. George has made a mistake. He misjudged all the moments where he thought Dream was reciprocating. Dream is going to realize that George is into him, reject him, and George is gonna have to move back to England.

They've shared very little words since they left the kitchen to do their night time routines, and George can tell by Dream's furrowed brow and lack of conversation that he has something on his mind. George knows he has fucked up. He shouldn't have been selfish enough to indulge himself in something that he knew would have consequences like these.

He tiptoes into the kitchen to grab a couple candles to take into his bedroom so he has some form of light as he gets ready for bed. He passes by the living room and spots Dream in front of the wood stove, loading it up with more firewood before they go to sleep.

"Will that last all night?" George asks.

Dream lifts his head from where he was staring blankly into the flames, blinking twice. "I hope so. But since our rooms are on the other end of the cabin, we might not get as much direct heat as we've been getting in the living room and the kitchen."

George nods. Surely he has enough blankets and layers to wear so he will stay warm all night. He returns to his room, setting down the candles on the dresser and bedside table. As he peels back the covers, ready to crawl inside, he hears a voice from the doorway.

"Hey, just coming to say goodnight," Dream whispers.

George swallows the saliva building in his throat. "Goodnight, Dream."

All he receives is a curt nod, and then Dream is gone.

Worry eats George up inside. He crawls into bed, tucking the covers around himself carefully. Laying in bed, he stares at the ceiling at the flickers of candlelight projected above him, chewing on his lower lip. Sleep doesn't come easy, but it arrives eventually.

...

His eyes open at a whisper.

"George?"

All that comes out is a mumbled noise of confusion as he rubs his sleepy eyes. In the darkness, he can make out Dream standing at his door, arms wrapped around his middle. He looks cold.

"Dream?" he croaks.

"Hey." Dream tiptoes closer to his bed, where George can actually make out his features now.

George hums a sleepy greeting, then whispers, "What is it?"

Dream tucks his arms around himself tighter, looking nervous. Dream is taller and broader than him, but right now he just looks... small. He seems apprehensive to speak, and George is nearly about to just put his head down and go back to sleep when Dream finally replies.

"I think my room has a draft in it. It's like, cold as fuck," he begins.

George nods, waiting for Dream to ask for some of his blankets or something. What follows, though, isn't something that he expected.

"Can I stay in here with you?"

George's heart leaps into his throat. He musters up the courage to ask, "Like... in my bed?"

Dream nods hesitantly. He seems scared of George's response. George is scared to give it.

"Um, sure."

Dream's eyebrows raise like he wasn't expecting that response at all. "Are you sure?"

Fuck, Dream, don't make me second-guess myself.

"It's fine, come on."

He lifts the covers, moving over to make room for Dream, and he slides in next to George. Dream instantly grabs the covers and tugs them tight to his chest to warm himself. Dream is lying on his back, staring at the ceiling in an unintentional mimicry of George earlier. George rests on his side, tired eyes staring at Dream's profile. The line of his forehead, nose, lower lip and chin is illuminated by the fire on the bedside table to the other side of Dream. He can even see the candlelight highlighting his eyelashes as he blinks. Pretty.

The world is quiet, the only noise being the whistling of the wind accompanied by their slow breathing. Faintly, George feels something. A small movement, a vibration of sorts. He waits for a moment, trying to figure out what it was. It happens again, and he can visibly see the body next to him just barely shake.

He realizes Dream is shivering.

So it's an unnecessary question when he asks, "Are you shivering?"

Dream's head cranes to look at him. An awkward smile creeps to his face, and he shivers once again, more intensely this time. "No."

"You're dumb," George whispers.

"Sorry, I just... I thought I could deal with the draft so I kept laying there trying to sleep, and now I can't stop shivering."

Spaghetti, George's tired brain supplies.

"I'm sorry I woke you up. You can go back to sleep, I'll make sure I stay on this side of the bed."

He sounds genuinely remorseful, like it's causing him mental anguish that he asked George of this. He can tell that Dream is making an effort to keep a good amount of distance between them, stiff as a board and nearly falling off the bed with how much space he gives George. His trembling hasn't lessened.

He worries his lower lip between his teeth. Maybe Dream would warm up quicker if they were closer together? Like penguins. Sharing body heat.

He's reminded of the visceral urge he had earlier when he touched Dream to just melt into his arms, the thought of how comforting and solid Dream felt under his hands. He wants that feeling wrapped around his whole body. Delirious, that's what George must be to have himself even considering asking Dream to *cuddle* with him and conserve warmth.

Dream shivers again.

George shouldn't push his luck. He fucked up by letting himself dance with Dream earlier, he should know better than to be selfish like that again, risk his friendship with Dream for the short gratification he receives pretending that just for a moment, they're something more. For both his and Dream's sake, he shouldn't.

"Shit," Dream mumbles through chattered teeth. "I might go get the comforter off the bed in my room."

He moves to get out of the bed, but before George even realizes it, his hand shoots out to grab the fabric of Dream's hoodie.

"No, you'll let more cold air under the covers and then I'll be cold, too."

He is just barely able to see Dream's eyebrows pinch in a frown. George swallows and parts his lips to speak.

"Just..."

Don't. You're smarter than this. You'll regret it.

"Just come here."

Instant regret sears through him. Dream's body stiffens, he doesn't speak, and George contemplates getting up right now and walking himself back to the airport.

"Okay," Dream says.

It all happens in an instant: Dream verbally agrees, starts to shuffle closer, and then suddenly, apprehensively, Dream presses next to him.

It's an awkward angle. Dream is flat on his back, and George is curled up on his side, facing him. Dream's shoulder is touching him and George's knees are pressed to his thigh. It doesn't feel natural, and he's sure they both notice.

"Turn on your side," George instructs.

Dream rolls over so that he's facing George. Eyes lock in the darkness, and they both know what they're meant to do now. Timid isn't a side of Dream that George ever sees, but he can see it now in how hesitant he is to tuck himself into George's body. Limbs tremble as they encircle each other, Dream's shaking from the cold, and George's just from the reality of it all. Here he is, in bed with his something-more of a best friend, cuddling him for warmth. He has the urge to pinch himself just to check if he's still asleep.

Dream's arms are warm and long as they wrap around George's middle, their legs tangling together under the covers. He prays that Dream can't hear the thundering of his heart when he rests his head

next to George's chest, his chin now settled in Dream's hair.

It feels surreal. Dream wrapped in his arms.

Dream readjusts the position of his arm, hand accidentally brushing over George's ribs in the process. George breathes in sharply at the sensation.

"Sorry. Ticklish?"

George would nod, but movement from his head is blocked by Dream's blonde waves sitting under his chin, so he's forced to resort to whispered words. "Yeah."

Dream's hand stays planted on his upper back, large palm splayed just below his shoulder blades. His hand covers so much area on George's back, the thought of it makes his head spin. He wonders if he dipped his hand lower, rested his thumbs on George's hips and wrapped the rest of his fingers around him, just how much of George's waist could Dream fit in his hands.

George curses at himself in his head. Those are not the thoughts to be having while Dream is literally pressed up next to him. Warm body against his. Big hands cradling him. Leg tucked between his, placed in a way that he could easily lift it up and press his thigh into George's—

"Your heart is beating fast."

Fuck.

"Sorry," George chokes out.

Dream laughs quietly, the vibration tickling George's chest. "Why are you sorry?"

He's not sure why he's apologizing. He's sorry for getting Dream all tangled up in the feelings that should've stayed put inside the back of his mind. He's sorry that he's so obvious. George swallows and doesn't respond.

"Does this make you nervous?" The whispered words are hesitant and careful.

George wants to sink into the Earth, let it swallow him whole and never return.

"Yes." His voice is weak.

"Me too."

George doesn't know how to interpret that. His mind is just clouded with Dream's presence, Dream's voice, Dream's sturdy body pressed flush next to him. His shivering has stopped, and now they've got a comfortable pocket of warmth underneath their blanket. Maybe sharing body heat like penguins actually works.

George shifts, and the tucked in blanket behind him comes loose and an abrupt wave of cool air pours in. Dream quickly reaches up and grabs the blanket to tuck it in place once more, then goes to replace his hand to its former spot on George's back.

But this time, it lands lower than it was before. His big, *big* hand rests at his hip, intentional or not, George isn't sure. He waits, scared to move, scared to breathe. Dream is just holding him here, firm hand on his hip, his thigh still tucked so dangerously between George's legs. Horrifyingly, he feels pleasure start to stir in his gut.

Then, what's worse, Dream starts to shift to get more comfortable. His legs are adjusting positions

and his face tilts until George can feel his hot breath against his neck, the sound of Dream's steady breathing magnified a hundred times over in his head. He knows he is getting more turned on by the second just from how Dream embraces him.

His heart is hammering in his chest, and he knows that Dream can hear it, but he can't control it. He's so scared Dream will notice how George's cock is slowly filling out beneath his sweatpants.

Dream suddenly twists his body in a way that puts him so precariously close to George, it has him instantly reaching down and stopping Dream's movement with a hand on his hip, mirroring the one on his own. Dream stills.

"Did I do something wrong?" His voice sounds small.

George swallows the saliva building in his throat, struggling to speak. "No, I just don't want you to ___"

He cuts himself off, realizing what he was about to say.

"Don't want me to what?"

I don't want you to feel that I'm hard.

His face burns red, and he's thankful Dream can't see it. His breathing is stuttered as he refuses to elaborate. Dream can definitely tell something is wrong, so he goes to pull away from George, but is held still by the hand on his hip.

"No, stay," George whimpers.

He's shifting back into place again, returning to where he was tucked into George's body, and much to George's mortification, Dream's hips move closer and his thigh shifts higher until it's rubbing against the bulge in George's pants. He inhales sharply, tensing his hold on Dream, and from the way Dream goes stiff as well he knows he has been caught.

The leg doesn't move, though, it stays completely still just barely pressed to his dick. He's suffocating in the loud silence they're enveloped in. Nothing moves, nothing changes, Dream is still breathing into his chest and his thigh is still between George's legs.

"Are you..." Dream trails off. George knows what he's asking.

"I'm sorry. It'll go away, I'll just roll over. Don't leave." He knows he sounds pathetic.

Hesitantly, Dream's hand skims up his side, ghosting over his ribs, then slowly back down to his waist. He rubs his thumbs sweetly into his hips, his touch careful but purposeful. George is fighting back the urge to whimper. He wants to arch into Dream's touch, grind down onto his thigh, but he stays stock-still.

"Is it because of me?" Dream whispers.

Fuck, fuck, fuck. He's not sure whether to answer that question truthfully. He doesn't get a chance to answer, because Dream grinds his thigh up into the bulge in George's sweatpants. His hands scrabble at the fabric of Dream's hoodie as he fails to muffle the strangled noise that echoes through the room. He wants to disappear.

"Dre-am!" His voice unexpectedly devolves into a yelp when Dream grinds his thigh against George's cock again. He must know what he's doing by doing this. He realizes that, acknowledges

it, but he's so caught up in the feeling it takes a second for the reality to set in. Dream *knows* what he's doing.

"Do you want me to stop?"

George's eyes roll back in his head when he ruts down onto Dream's thigh himself this time. It's not even in response to his question, he just can't stop himself from reflexively chasing that pleasure. He's mortified, but that emotion is washed away with how Dream grinds on him again.

No words are spoken, but the message is clear.

Keep going.

Dream grinds against him, encouraging him to keep riding his thigh like he is. George is reminded of the hand that was resting on his waist as courage slowly returns to each of the fingers, one by one, and Dream starts grabbing his waist, squeezing it, and dipping below his shirt to explore his skin. His hands trail across him, memorizing the dips and curves. George shivers again, but not from the cold this time.

His gentle hands cross into uncharted territory when they come to caress George's stomach, trailing up above his belly button to his sternum. He's sure that Dream can feel the way his abdominal muscles tense when the sensation arrives, but he doesn't push Dream away or ask him to stop, so he continues.

Lithe digits dance up his chest and a strong thigh rubs and pushes between Georges legs, devolving him into a squirming mess. He whines when Dream hooks his ankle around George's leg, bringing it in for him to rut against as well. He can feel that Dream is hard even from the awkward angle they're frothing at.

All of his senses are just battered with Dream, Dream, Dream. He wonders if he's allowed to touch him in return.

He knows Dream can hear his heart racing, but isn't sure if he's observant enough to notice the pace at which it quickens when George's fingers come to rest in his hair, threading through the blonde strands. Hot breath fans across George's chest and neck in the form of a low moan, Dream tilting his head shyly to encourage him. He pets Dream's hair, carding his hand through the surprisingly thick hair.

Suddenly, a burst of sensitivity crackles through George's nerves as Dream brushes his fingers across George's right nipple. He can't even attempt to hold back the gasp that escapes him, nor stop the way he reflexively tightens his grip on Dream's hair, tugging it far too roughly in surprise.

"*Fuck,*" Dream gasps, stilling.

George pulls his hand away like he's been burned. "I'm sorry," he squeaks.

Dream removes himself from the crevice where he was nuzzled against George's chest, and for the first time since they wrapped the covers around themselves and melted into one another, he lifts his head to look at George.

The lighting is shitty, but just good enough that he can see the dark, wet look in Dream's eyes and the way he licks his lips as he stares at George in return. God, he looks so fucking gone already.

"Hi," George says weakly.

Dream undoes himself from George, removing the arm that had wormed up his hoodie and grabbing the hem of the fabric, pulling it back down into place. Their legs stay tangled together, but the grinding has come to a gradual halt.

“Hi.”

Dream’s face is too close. It isn’t close enough. George’s gaze drops down to his lips, then back up.

“Am I going too fast?” Dream whispers.

“No, I just—”

Don’t know how to say what I want.

George isn’t a stranger to sex. He has experience, knows what to do with his hands, his mouth, but it’s like he can’t find a way to communicate with Dream except for his pathetic choked noises and half-formed sentences. It’s laughable how he must look like a stuttering virgin right now, just like he felt when they were dancing. Dream has this bewitching ability to make him lose any and all coherency with just a patient tilt of his head. He doesn’t push, doesn’t coerce, just lets George sit there with his mouth gaping like a fish, unable to communicate his thoughts.

“It’s—you’re not going too fast, I’m just... Nervous?” he offers.

Dream’s voice is made of warmth and comfort. “I am too. I’m sorry if I’m asking too many questions. I don’t want to make you do anything you don’t want to do.”

George is still having trouble comprehending that Dream wants this. Wants *him*. It’s like his brain has short circuited at the reality that Dream is reciprocating, that he’s *initiating*, and now all his wires are fried and he can barely think.

“I’m bad at communicating,” George mumbles.

“That’s alright.”

“I’m sorry for pulling your hair.”

“It’s okay. I liked it.”

His dick throbs at that. When he heard Dream swear as his hair was pulled, he figured it was in pain, but this new information is so much better. The rich lust swirling in his gut makes him want to pull on it more, tug his hair around a bit to draw all kinds of sweet noises from him. Cold and fragile fingers come to nest in Dream’s hair again, gentle for now.

He’s like a cat in how he tilts his head back into George’s touch. He peers down through his lashes at George, eyes glinting.

“Can I...” Dream begins, voice heavy and raspy. “Can I kiss you?”

A quick and breathless *please* is all that leaves George’s mouth before he’s using the leverage he has on Dream’s head to pull him in.

It’s warm. It’s hesitant. It’s so easy just to kiss Dream. Even though they’re both turned on, the kiss doesn’t feel fueled by lust. Desire, yes, but with the gentle hand that comes to rest on George’s cheek, the kiss is nothing short of tender. The little voice at the back of George’s head that had

been screaming at him all day, reminding him how badly he wants to kiss Dream, feel his lips and tongue like he's doing right now, is singing in content.

Dream tastes like sweetness, it drips from every part of his body, smearing onto George and dissolving him into Dream's sticky, sugary grasp. His mouth is so hot and wet, George craves it, craves the heat keeping him warm from the cold lurking outside. He's addicted, drunk on nothing but Dream.

The eager touch creeping under his hoodie startles him, but isn't unwelcome. He pushes his body into the sensation, asking for more, more, more. Dream obliges, squeezing his hip to make him writhe and trailing his fingertips up to his chest again. That same electric zap from earlier returns when Dream rubs his thumb into George's nipple with intent. He would be ashamed of the whine he lets loose into Dream's mouth, but it seems like it spurs Dream on even more.

Their mouths finally part when George gasps at the onslaught of pleasure just from Dream playing with his chest like this.

"Yeah?" Dream murmurs against his lips. He sounds smug.

He hates to ruin the soft, gentle atmosphere, but George can never temper his competitive streak.

George pulls on his hair in return, a childish attempt to knock him down a peg. Dream moans, a noise that goes straight between George's legs. Tugging harder earns him a whimpered swear.

"Unfair," Dream whines.

George just snickers and gives him a soothing pat. "You can't just tell me you like having your hair pulled and not expect me to do it."

Dream pinches his side playfully. "You're a menace."

"You like it."

"Yeah." Dream kisses at his jaw, then down his neck. George can feel the light stubble scraping against the column of his throat. He keens, altered breathing giving him away. Whispered into his skin, Dream asks, "Why don't you tell me what *you* like?"

Where to even begin, George thinks. Dream kisses his Adam's apple, and it gives him a thought.

"I like your mouth on me," he blurts out. He should be more ashamed, but his filter is long gone. Moans and whimpers are so easily pulled from his vocal chords now, noises he would try to muffle if he were a smidge more coherent right now.

Dream nips at his throat. His teeth scrape the sensitive flesh and it makes George's head fall back, baring his neck further.

"God, you're so hot," Dream rasps. He bites at the side of his neck. "I want to eat you."

"*Fuck*. Are we talking metaphorically or literally, here?"

"In any way you'll have me." Dream's breath is hot against the wet skin left from the saliva of his mouth. "I'm partial to the literal sense," he tacks on.

God. He could come just from the *thought* of Dream eating him out.

He grinds down into Dream's thigh like he's gone mad, had a taste of the pleasure that Dream

gives him and can't get enough. Dream encourages it, grinding on George in return. He's probably leaving hickeys, George realizes, as he continues to suck and nibble at his throat.

"You can't be serious about that," George gasps.

Their bodies move in tandem, heavy and warm in how they rock against each other, movements filled with sweltering need. It's hot, feverish, and growing in intensity as they continue. He can't resist the urge to pull Dream's hair again. He whines into George's skin and pulls up to kiss him once more on the lips.

"Why wouldn't I be? We both washed up," he reasons.

Lust-fueled flames lick at George's gut. Dream actually wants to eat him out.

"Okay."

Immediately after his assent, Dream's hand darts down to his ass, one large palm grabbing at the flesh. It nearly hurts how tight he's groping his ass, but George doesn't mind, he prays that it leaves marks.

"*Christ*, George, don't know how you hid this from me for so long," he pants as he kneads his ass. "I thought the fans talking about your ass was a *joke*, imagine my surprise when you come home and I find out they aren't exaggerating."

This is humiliating. He loves it. And the fact that he referred to George coming to Florida as *coming home* knocks the wind out of his lungs.

"Is this why you make ass eating jokes to me all the time?"

The embarrassment at getting caught is tangible on Dream's face. "Okay. Okay. It looks bad, but I —"

"Did you think that if you made enough jokes about eating my ass you'd manifest it into reality?" George cuts him off, laughing.

Dream's knee pushes harder into his crotch, sending his breathless giggles into moans.

"Seems like it worked, didn't it?"

George can't argue with that, especially not when Dream uses the hold on his ass to drag him closer, grinding against him. He really wants Dream's tongue inside him right now.

It pains George for them to pull apart, but Dream's mouth reaching where he needs it to be is impossible if they stay in the same position. If his whole body wasn't burning with desire, he's sure the cold air now rushing under the covers would make him shiver.

"How do you want me?" George asks.

Dream bites his lip, eyeing George up and down in the candlelight. He wants to say something, George can tell, but he's apprehensive.

"Would you, like— uh, are you okay with—"

"Any day now."

"Sixty-nine?" Dream blurts.

Redness rushes to George's cheeks, Dream's expression a perfect mirror of his. That's not what he expected to hear, but he is so, so down for it.

"Okay," George whispers.

"Is it alright if I um," he feels a tug on his waistband, "Take these off?"

"I don't know how you're going to get your mouth on me otherwise," George quips, trying to deflect his anxiety with sass, but right now, Dream can see right through him.

He helps Dream pull off both his thick sweatpants and his underwear, pushing them aside somewhere else under the covers. He hisses when his cock brushes against the bedsheets, no doubt leaving a stain of precome filthily on the fabric.

They're forced to push the warm covers off themselves so that George can actually turn around without having to be suffocated under the comforter. He thought he would've been more shocked by the cold air than he actually was, but it doesn't bother him too much. The sheer lust-driven heat radiates off of both their forms and warms the air around them significantly.

It's utterly humiliating how easy it is for Dream to grab a hold of George's hips and drag him backwards, up, up his chest, until he can fucking feel the hot breath on his ass. He whimpers, struggling to keep himself up on all fours as he hovers over Dream. The grip on his hips is bruising as he is manhandled into place, he knows it won't be long till his cock will have drooled a puddle of precome onto Dream's clothed chest.

Dream begins by slowly trailing kisses across George's thighs, pulling the skin between ivory teeth just far enough to nibble and bite on. His hands massage George's ass, thumbs digging in to spread him apart. He whimpers into the quiet room, thighs already trembling even though Dream has yet to get to the good part.

"God, your ass is so nice," Dream murmurs against his skin. "You're insane for constantly wearing those sweatpants that ride up."

"Have you been looking?" George teases through a muffled groan when a sharp nip is delivered to his asscheek.

"It looked at me first, your honor."

George snorts. "You're actually an idiot. Eat me out."

Finally, Dream tugs him even closer to lick a wide stripe up George's ass, laving his tongue across his hole and making his toes curl. Dream's mouth is so, so hot, he feels like it's melting him with every kiss, every lick, like he's eating George up just like he wanted to. He's eager with it, licking and sucking all while he keeps a bruising hold on George's hips to keep him in place, to make sure he feels every motion of Dream's lips and tongue and teeth.

Dream's stubble scrapes against the sensitive flesh of his ass and inner thigh, digging in and scratching just enough that it draws a whimper out of George. He gets practically pulled back onto Dream's face by his hips, stubble rubbing him raw as he gets fucked open on his tongue.

Dream apparently notices his squirming, because he removes his mouth to ask, "Everything okay?"

"Your... your stubble," he pants.

"Shit, I'm sorry, does it hurt?"

“No, it’s okay, please don’t stop.”

Dream dives back in immediately, so eager that George wonders if his tongue is going to be sore by the end of this. It’s like he doesn’t give a damn about his own comfort—he’s sure that Dream’s neck must be straining and his mouth is working endlessly. His tongue licks heavy and feverish on George’s flushed skin, dragging over his hole and hesitantly probing inside.

“Mmm! Ah, fuck, *more*,” George pleads.

“Needy,” is all that Dream says, and he’s instantly back to fucking George with his tongue, both big hands grabbing his ass and holding him in place.

His brain is clouded and hazy with pleasure. He can’t think straight, can’t see straight, head falling and vision blurred from the darkness. He wrings his fists in the sheets, not knowing what to do with his hands when Dream is taking him apart like this.

He’s positive that by now his throbbing dick is dripping onto Dream’s chest. He wants to reach down and touch himself, but he gets a weird kind of satisfaction at the fact that he’s getting this worked up over Dream just eating him out. He doesn’t get rimmed very often, and never with this kind of enthusiasm. It’s addicting.

He’s not sure when they fell closed, but his eyes open when he feels Dream’s body twitch beneath him. Looking down, directly beneath his face, he is reminded of what he’s supposed to be doing right now.

Dream’s cock is straining against his sweatpants, begging to be touched. George struggles to keep himself balanced as he uses one hand to stroke Dream through his pants, slow and steady. His pushes into George’s touch immediately.

“*Oh*, George, please,” Dream begs, and god, does George love the sound of it.

It’s so filthy how he can *feel* Dream moan, the vibrations of his vocal chords humming where his mouth is attached to George, still eating him out like a starving man. His hips rock forward into George’s hand, nonverbally pleading for more.

With some difficulty, he manages to yank Dream’s clothes down without toppling forwards, but the sight he’s met with makes him dizzy enough he thinks the possibility of losing balance isn’t gone just yet.

Dream’s cock is hard, red, leaking, but most shockingly, *fucking huge*.

“Oh, shit.”

“Did I do something wrong? Do you want me to stop?” he asks, misinterpreting George’s exclamation of shock.

George swallows the saliva building in his throat. He wraps a hand around Dream’s throbbing cock, marveling how small it makes his hand look in comparison. His head fucking spins at the size of it. A strangled noise permeates the room when he touches it.

“George?” he whines.

“I hate you,” he says, stroking Dream slowly. “Only you would have a dick as big as your ego.”

Wheezing laughter follows George’s statement. The combination of moans and giggles coming

from Dream has George smiling like an idiot, and he's thankful Dream can't see his face like this.

"Sorry, maybe I should have—*oh*, mmph, *please*," Dream moans pathetically when George licks the drooling head of his cock.

His hips kick upwards, pressing his slick cock up against George's face and rutting against it. Precome is smeared on his cheek and some filthy part of his brain is tempted to just let Dream keep frotting against his face, but he craves the challenge of fitting this thing in his mouth, so he saves that idea for another time.

Thin fingers stroke him slowly, George murmuring, "You're gonna break my jaw with this thing."

"You don't have to suck me off, I'll be fine just—"

George cuts him off as he goes down on him.

Dream's nails dig into the flesh of his ass, gasping as George works his cock into his mouth, struggling around the size of it. He inhales a deep breath while he attempts to take in more, saliva starting to pool in his mouth already and wetting his lips. He grabs a tight hold of Dream's thighs to keep himself steady and to also stop Dream from squirming.

He knows trying to take the entire thing isn't feasible right now, especially with how out of practice George's oral skills are, so he settles for bobbing his head up and down on what he *can* fit in his mouth without gagging.

He's messy, he always is when he gives head, drool leaking out of his mouth and aiding the slide of his hand along what parts of Dream's cock that his mouth can't reach. Sloppy lips kiss up and down the side of Dream's dick, his tongue tracing each vein and ridge, slow and teasing.

"Holy shit, George," he whispers in a hushed voice, a moan following right behind his sentence when George thumbs the head of his dick.

Whimpers tumble out of Dream's mouth as he uses his hands to play with him, but George doesn't leave him waiting for long. He dives back down, bobbing his head lower and lower as he valiantly tries to take more. Deepthroating for the first time in years proves to be more challenging than he expected—he gags when he goes down too far. He pulls off with spit dribbling from his lower lip and eyes stinging with tears.

Dream must've felt the way he gagged around him, and he can surely hear his poorly hidden coughs.

"Don't push yourself," he warns.

"I'm not."

Dream has stopped his actions, hands still settled on George's ass as he waits for him to recover.

And George hates to be selfish, but he's really starting to miss the sensation of Dream fucking him with his tongue, so he subtly sways his ass in an attempt to remind Dream of what he had been doing before George started gagging on his cock.

"I'm okay, let's keep going," he urges.

With the encouragement, Dream jumps right back in. George goes back to sucking him off, minding how far he lets himself go down. Dream is groaning into his skin when George does

something he particularly likes. It's a fun reward, he finds something that makes Dream feel good, and he gets to feel the noisy moans in return.

He's met with a surprise when suddenly, Dream's thumb inches closer and tentatively presses inside him just barely. George pulls off and his head hangs, swearing under his breath. Spit isn't the best lube substitute, but it does help Dream work his thumb in a little further, almost to the first knuckle.

"This okay?" he whispers.

George squirms, whimpering instead of responding.

"I need verbal responses, George," Dream murmurs, but it's not demanding or harsh. It's a soft reminder that Dream values his comfort over everything else. George's heart would race a little faster if all his blood hadn't already gone somewhere else.

George's arms that have turned to jello nearly give way underneath him, and doesn't know how much longer he can keep himself propped up. He must be taking too long to respond, because Dream withdraws his thumb completely.

"George?" He sounds worried now.

"Just—just shut up and give me a second," he croaks.

Crawling off of where he was perched over Dream, he slides off the bed and nearly buckles at the knees when he tries to stand on wobbly legs. Now that he's standing, away from the bed and away from the body heat they were sharing, he's reminded how fucking cold it is.

Dream stares at him quizzically while he rifles through the clothes in his suitcase till his hand hits something solid and cylindrical. He curls his cold fingertips around a bottle of lube and rushes his way back to the warmth of the bed, immediately curling into Dream's bubble of heat.

As soon as he spots the item in George's hand, he starts to wheeze.

"Seriously? You brought lube?"

George smacks his thigh. "Fuck off."

"Oh, come on. Were you planning on seducing me this whole time? Luring me into bed with you?"

George scowls. He could've never expected that he would end up half-naked next to Dream when he agreed to this trip, but he thinks the real reason that he brought lube is much more humiliating to admit.

"Were you gonna use it on yourself?" Dream asks, looking him up and down.

"Doesn't matter."

Dream's eyes light up. "You were. Dirty boy."

George knows it was meant as a silly comment to tease him, but his mind still reels at the name Dream calls him. *Dirty boy*. It's true, he figured he would be pent up from staying in the same cabin as Dream for a week, so he tossed the lube in there just in case. He is whispering praises to his past self for making that decision, because he needs Dream's hands inside him right now.

“Do you wanna tell me what you were gonna do with this?” Dream asks, grabbing the lube from his hand.

“No.”

“Do you want me to tell you what *I* want to do with it, then?” Dream offers.

“...Yeah.”

He leans in close, whispering, “I want to put you on your back, spread your legs, and finger you open.”

George is going to die. He wonders what happened to the shy, hesitant person Dream was earlier. It felt like they were on an even playing field when they were both bashful and tentative with their cuddling, but now Dream is starting to regain his normal cocky behavior. It was probably because George told him he had a big dick. Arrogant bastard.

“You good with that?” Dream asks.

“Fuck, yes. Please hurry.”

“Yes, sir,” he chuckles, and then he’s nudging George’s shoulder till he’s flat on his back, crawling across him and coming to settle between his legs.

He does like he promised and spreads George’s legs apart with a solid grip on his thighs. George shouldn’t be embarrassed because he was practically sitting on Dream’s face just minutes ago, but it feels different like this, he feels more exposed when Dream can see his face. He is tempted to look away just to hide, but he’s stuck in place, hypnotized by the manner in which Dream is staring at him. His eyes are lustful but enamored, marveling George like he’s a piece of art.

Dream rubs the inside of his thigh in a comforting manner, thumbs pressing into the red marks where his stubble had rubbed George’s skin raw. It makes him suck a breath in through his teeth.

“Sorry.” Dream stops touching the sensitive skin and moves his hands elsewhere. “You should’ve told me I was scratching you this much. I could’ve gone and shaved, or done something else that didn’t hurt you.”

“It’s fine. It felt good.” His face is burning.

Dream grins, grabbing the lube and snapping the lid open. “You’re filthy.”

You don’t know the half of it, George thinks to himself.

He watches Dream dribble lube onto his big fingers, mind racing at the knowledge that those fingers are about to be inside of him. Lube is smeared around his hole, warming him up and letting him get used to the feeling and prepare himself. Dream leans down to press a kiss to his forehead, then begins to push his middle finger in.

George is so dizzy from the tender forehead kiss that it takes a second to process that Dream’s long finger is working its way inside him, slowly and carefully.

“Good?” Dream asks.

“Yes, please just keep going,” George whines, attempting to push his hips back onto his finger. “I’ll tell you if something’s wrong.”

Dream kisses his forehead again and leans back on his haunches to get a good angle to work at. He pumps his finger in and out, biting his lip as he focuses. He looks good like this, hair messy and cheeks flushed, with dark eyes shining in the light of the candles. He had pulled his sweatpants back up for the moment, to avoid having to take them off completely just yet, but George can still see the bulge in the fabric begging to be touched.

A second finger is gingerly eased in alongside the first one. George whimpers at the stretch, but with how careful and slow Dream is being, it doesn't hurt. It feels good, being stretched open so meticulously by big, big hands mindful of their size.

As Dream keeps working him open and loosening him up, he wonders what follows next. Will Dream just fuck him on his fingers until he comes? Use those long fingers to press against his prostate and make him scream?

His mind drifts to something else, something more enticing, a thought that makes his cock twitch against his stomach.

Would Dream want to fuck him?

He throws his head back against the pillow when a third finger is introduced. He's really starting to feel the stretch now, his hand darts down to touch himself while Dream continues, stroking himself to make the discomfort less obvious.

He can see the way Dream is eyeing him, he can tell that the urge to check in on him is at the tip of his tongue.

"I'm fine, your fingers are just... big."

But George knows what's even bigger, so he powers through the sensation with a grimace. Dream's fingers thrust in and out, consistent and steady, when he suddenly crooks them at a different angle, and George's whole body convulses. A whorish moan echoes off the walls, piercing the silence of the quiet night.

"Is that it?" Dream purrs, calloused fingertips massaging that same spot again.

George can't speak, can't catch his breath because Dream is mercilessly stimulating his prostate with confident movements, fucking him on his thick fingers while George jerks himself off.

"So pretty, George," he murmurs.

The stimulation of his prostate combined with him touching himself has him already nearing his orgasm. He's right on the edge, chasing that feeling, then he stops.

"Dream, wait," he yelps.

All movement stops instantly. It feels like George has been dunked in ice cold water when Dream pulls his fingers out, leaving him laid there, chest heaving and orgasm ripped away.

Dream's brows are pinched together. "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine," he quavers. "I was about to come."

Dream's face softens, chuckling. "I thought the whole point of this is for me to make you come."

"I mean, yeah, but I wanted—"

George cuts himself off. Is it too much to admit he wants Dream to actually fuck him? He has lube, but obviously didn't think to bring a condom. He doesn't know if Dream is okay without protection. He doesn't even know if Dream wants to fuck him at all. The bulge straining in his pants begs to be taken care of, though.

"Wanted what?"

"I wanted you to fuck me."

Dream, caught off guard, sputters at his blunt response. "Oh! You uh— I... Yeah, I can do that."

"Are you sure? I didn't bring a condom or anything. I wasn't really expecting to be doing this, so..." George mumbles.

"I'm fine without a condom if you're fine with it. It's been a while since I've been with someone like this, but last time I was tested everything was negative. I can fuck you raw if that's what you want."

Dream fucking him raw. Jesus.

"God, you say such dirty things so easily. I want it, please," George pleads, not even trying to hide his desperation now.

"I've got you." Dream is already undressing, fully removing his pants and underwear, leaving him in just his hoodie, same as George.

Now that he's naked from the waist down, George can see his cock again, this time from a different angle. He looks like a god like this, tall and broad and looming over George's splayed out form, stroking himself slow and even while he looks down at George. He would worship Dream every second of the day if he could, he would be the most devout follower if Dream allowed it.

His gaze is trained on how Dream is slicking himself up with more lube, large and veiny hands working himself over. He's so big everywhere.

He settles himself in a comfortable position between George's legs, keeping them spread open with one hand on his thigh, and uses his other hand to carefully line his cock up to George's hole, wet head pressed up against him.

"Ready?" Dream asks.

"Please."

His choked begging is all the confirmation that Dream needs, and he starts to push in. George whimpers and stuffs the sleeve of his hoodie in his mouth, biting it while Dream presses inside him. He's so huge, he fills George up so much he's afraid he's going to break. Warm palms massage his thighs to comfort him and keep him distracted while Dream almost reams him in half.

He doesn't know what to do besides sit there and take it, fists clenching and unclenching as Dream keeps pushing in. He feels like he should be all the way in by now, but it keeps coming, keeps filling him impossibly fuller.

Dream's eyes are trained on the spot where they're joined together, only watching himself disappear inside of George and never looking up. George wishes he could see it too, but from this angle he can't, and he doesn't think he has the strength to move at all right now. His toes are fucking curling with the overwhelming sensation and he thinks he could cry when Dream's hips

finally meet his ass, confirming that he's fully seated inside. It's almost too much to bear, but he's no quitter.

Dream leans over him, kissing the corner of his mouth. "There you go, sweetheart. It's all inside."

His eyes roll back in his head at the pet name. He doesn't think he'll survive this night if Dream keeps talking to him like that.

"Big," is the only coherent word George is able to get out. He's sure if he tried to say anything else, all that would come out would be unintelligible moans.

"Yeah? Can you handle it?" Dream murmurs.

"Yes, f-fucking asshole, now move."

"You're lucky I don't bend you over and turn your ass red for talking to me like that," Dream whispers against his lips.

Holy shit. It's an empty threat, he knows, a quick retaliation at George's snappy attitude, but *fuck* does that turn him on. He groans at the idea of getting bent over Dream's knee and spanked.

"Oh, you *like* that."

"Another time, Dream," he whines, "I just need you to fuck me now."

"Shh, I know."

Dream steadies his stance, and starts to move. He's slow at first, careful while George is still getting used to having something so huge inside of him, thumb rubbing soothing circles into his hip.

He easily picks up the pace, leaning over George with his hands planted next to his shoulders on the bed, using the leverage to deepen his thrusts. George's hands scrabble at his back, fisting into the fabric of his hoodie just because he needs something to hold onto. He feels weak and powerless like this, so pathetically broken underneath Dream, but it's addicting. Dream is the only person he trusts to see him like this, stripped back to nothing but raw pleasure and desperation.

A hand darts up his hoodie and plays with his chest, Dream mimicking his actions earlier by teasing and rubbing his sensitive nipples. He's starting to regret not taking off his hoodie when he was getting undressed earlier, because he can feel sweat starting to stick his hair to his forehead.

He remembers reading somewhere about how in the late stages of hypothermia the cold gets so severe that people start to experience an unbearable heat. Delusional, they begin to strip their bodies of clothing to escape the burning sensation they're feeling. George thinks he's experiencing that right now. Six feet of snow outside and he's feverish and sweating. He woke up this morning thinking he'd get frostbite by the end of the day, and instead he feels like he's on fire.

George's shaky hand wipes the damp hair off his forehead so he can see Dream better. He's so hot, mouth dropped open slightly while his strong hips fuck George into the mattress. He shifts his body to change the angle and George's vision goes white when his cock brushes past his prostate. A guttural moan is ripped from his throat when Dream goes harder.

"There?"

"Yes, *fuck*— you're so good, Dream." George's ankles link together behind his back, urging him to

go faster.

Dream hangs his head with a groan. “Shit, say that again.”

“You’re so good, love the way you fuck me,” George praises. “So *big*, can barely take it.”

“You don’t know what you do to me, George.”

He surges forward to bite at George’s throat again, nipping at his jawline right under his ear. His quickening thrusts are bouncing George up the bed, forcing breathless *ah, ah, ahs* from his mouth. His broad frame is covering George entirely as he practically pins him down.

The rustling of bedsheets, smack of skin, and filthy moans echo off the walls. It’s a deliciously humiliating feeling for George to realize that half the ruined moans he’s hearing are *his*. He’s going insane.

Precome is completely soaking his stomach, and though George has never even done it before, he thinks he could come untouched right now. All of his senses feel heightened, overwhelmed in a way he has never felt before, so much so that he is sure any slight touch to his cock would send him over the edge.

“Close, Dream,” he sobs.

In an instant, Dream’s fist is wrapped around his throbbing cock. He doesn’t even get a chance to indulge the idea of coming untouched, because Dream is jerking him off and purring, “Go ahead, sweetheart, come for me.”

Dream’s murmured words are all it takes for George to tip over the edge.

He twitches and convulses as he orgasms, shooting come across his stomach and even up onto his hoodie that’s bunched up at his chest. Waves of pleasure crest through him as Dream keeps fucking him through it, helping him ride out the mind-numbing orgasm, whispering praises all the while.

“That’s it. Come all over yourself, get yourself all dirty. So hot.”

His back arches as the last spurts of come dribble from his spent cock, and he finally relaxes, tense body going entirely limp. He’s exhausted, bone-tired, and his brain has turned to mush. Bleary eyes take a second to refocus, and he finds Dream jerking off over him, having pulled out.

George weakly bats away Dream’s hand, replacing it with his own. He pumps him a couple times and then stills. Dream looks at him puzzled.

His thoughts are muddled, clouded with a haze of dopamine from his orgasm. He’s reminded of how godly Dream looks as he stares down at George, chest heaving and eyes crazed. It takes a second for George’s tongue to stop feeling so heavy in his mouth, and then he finally gets the chance to speak.

His demand is raspy and delirious.

“Fuck my hand.”

Dream mutters a quiet *shit* and leans over George, steadying himself with his arms planted on the bed, and starts to roll his hips into George’s hand. He keeps it still with a tight grip for Dream to fuck into, moans and profanities leaving his mouth in excess.

Dream's teeth are gritted as he is made to use George's hand to get himself off. It's so hot seeing him like this.

"Good boy," George rasps.

Dream's eyes light up in excitement, hips stuttering.

"So good, Dream, made me come so hard." His dirty talk isn't the most impressive, but he blames that on the fact it feels like his head is filled with cotton. "Be a good boy and come."

Dream does as he's told, moaning through his orgasm while he fucks his fist. His come lands across George's stomach and chest, dripping down his body in the most filthy way. He could listen to Dream whimper and moan like this forever, his little sounds from his orgasm making George's dick twitch in interest, but he knows it's going to be a while before he could even consider a round two.

Dream collapses next to him once he's wrung himself dry.

"You alright?" George asks.

Dream chuckles, running his clean hand across his face in exhaustion. "I should ask you that. You're the one that got fucked."

"Well, I'm gonna be sore tomorrow, if that's what you wanted to know."

Dream gives him a wet, uncoordinated kiss on the cheek as an apology. "Sorry."

George hums sleepily. "If you really want to make it up to me, you could get a rag to clean up with. I've kinda got both of our come all over me."

"Shit, yeah," Dream laughs, getting up from the bed with unsteady limbs, hastily pulling his underwear back on, and shuffling his way to the bathroom to get a towel.

While he lies there waiting, covered in both of their come, he stares at the ceiling. He seriously just did that. He seriously just had sex with Dream.

Biting his lip, he ponders what this means for their relationship. He knows Dream is attracted to him sexually, so a friends-with-benefits situation is plausible, but George doesn't think he could do that to himself knowing he would want more. He doesn't even know if Dream would want to do this again, he might call this a one time thing that they never speak of again, and nothing changes.

With the warmth of Dream's body gone, the cold starts to creep up on him again.

He's shivering by the time Dream returns with a wet rag.

"Sorry, I couldn't find any normal sized washcloths. I was nearly about to come in here with a full sized towel when I finally found one."

George chuckles feebly. Dream takes the rag and swipes it across his stomach, cleaning him of the mess. He works his way down, cleaning off his dick and then wiping away the lube between his legs. He's careful when he runs the wet rag over his sensitive hole, mindful of the soreness. He grabs George's pants and helps him tug them back on to warm his cold, bare legs. Dream instructs him to lift his arms so he can pull the dirty hoodie off his body, tossing it in the floor and hurrying to grab a new, clean one from his suitcase.

It makes him soften how tender Dream is being with him. No one treats him so devastatingly kindly. George feels treasured in how Dream carefully touches him, oddly domestic and so intimate his head begins to spin again. Even if Dream doesn't reciprocate his feelings, George can pretend.

Once he's finished cleaning both of them up, he falls back into bed next to George, snuggling up close. George wraps his arms around Dream's solid, comforting body.

"Thanks for cleaning me. I would've taken a shower, but I don't think I can stand right now." George's voice is quiet with sleep.

"Anytime. I like taking care of you."

God, does that kill him. Surely Dream doesn't know the way that those words crush him, or else he wouldn't be saying them. Dream won't understand how their gentle post-coital cuddling is breaking him apart. It's perfect, everything he has wanted since he came to Florida, but the overwhelming uncertainty is crushing. Part of him wants to talk to Dream, wants to sort things out, but the more selfish part just wants to lay here with him as long as he can and put off the inevitable.

He doesn't talk, doesn't want to risk the possibility that he will say something he'll regret. So instead, he just wraps his arms around Dream a little tighter. Dream is perceptive, though, and George is worn out enough that his heavy thoughts are palpable.

"You're quiet."

"Just tired," George lies.

He can tell that Dream doesn't buy it. They lie there enveloped in silence just as they are enveloped in each other's arms. Dream leans in to kiss him, but George turns his head away, heart racing. He can see Dream's frown out of the corner of his eye. George doesn't look at him.

"Did I do something?" He can hear Dream's voice weakening with worry.

He can't bear to respond. He wants to lie through his teeth just so that he can stay in Dream's arms a little while longer, but he knows Dream won't give it up until he figures out what's tormenting him. His caring nature will be George's downfall.

"George." Dream's tentative hands cradle his jaw, turning his head to look at him. He tries his hardest to remain stone-faced, unreadable. "Is something wrong?"

Why did you do that?

Why did you have sex with me?

Why are you still trying to kiss me?

He doesn't know where to begin. Whether to be outright and ask the questions that he needs answered, or be vague and be let down easily, he's unsure. He can't delay for much longer, though, can't stand seeing that anxious expression marring Dream's perfect face.

"Did you want to have sex with me?" he finally asks.

Dream's face twists up in confusion. "What? Of course. I wouldn't have initiated otherwise."

"Why?" His voice breaks.

“‘Cause I’m... I’m sexually attracted to you?” Dream stutters.

Right. Sexual attraction. That’s all it is, all it ever will be. George is stupid to think otherwise, stupid to let himself fantasize that they’d be something more. He let the delusion that Dream is so careful and kind to him get out of control, cloud his mind enough that he didn’t realize that he must have treated George like that in order to avoid scaring him off. He stiffens, suddenly uncomfortable being wound up in Dream’s arms. He makes a subtle attempt to leave Dream’s hold, but is locked in place.

“Can you please tell me what you’re thinking? You’re scaring me. Did you not want to have sex?”

“No, Dream, that’s not it.” His voice comes out harsher than expected. Dream looks at him with a hurt expression. “It was just sex to you, wasn’t it?”

He hates the way Dream looks at him. He hates having caused the distraught appearance written in the lines of his face. He’s visibly struggling for words, mouth opening and closing as he stares at George. George thinks he’s going to be sick if Dream looks at him like this any longer.

“I never said that it was *just sex* to me. You’re not just a quick fuck to me, George.”

George laughs dryly. “Yeah, obviously. I’m your best friend. Your best friend that you had sex with, but that’s all, isn’t it? I’m not a one night stand, but things aren’t going to change.”

He hates arguing like this, wrapped in Dream’s arms like they’re lovers. He needs to escape and put distance between them, but Dream holds him close. He wants to just go to sleep and deal with this in the morning, when his brain isn’t still so addled with the heavy emotions that follow sex, but Dream isn’t one to let things go without a resolution.

“Do you *want* things to change?” Dream asks.

George bites his tongue.

“I need an answer, because you keep putting words in my mouth. We can change. ‘Best friends’ doesn’t have to be the only thing that defines us,” Dream continues.

“Friends with benefits? Is that what you’re saying?” George whispers. The smell of Dream’s cologne is starting to clog his nostrils and make him lightheaded. He’s not sure how much more of this he can stand.

“If that’s what you want.” Dream’s voice sounds forced.

It *isn’t* what he wants. It’s the last thing that he wants. He thinks he’d rather have this be a one time thing that they never speak of again than to keep fucking Dream and never have anything more. George is so dizzy with his own thoughts that he recognizes the strain in Dream’s voice belatedly.

“What do *you* want, Dream?”

“More,” is the sole word whispered into the top of his head as Dream holds him.

George blinks.

“More than fuckbuddies and more than best friends.” His admission is quiet and scared.

He is unsure of what Dream defines as ‘more’, and he finds himself terrified to ask. He has never felt as vulnerable as he feels right now, clinging to Dream’s words and pleading for them to be

what he wants to hear.

“What does that mean to you?” George’s breathing is shaky.

“More of this,” Dream squeezes him softly. “More holding you, kissing you. Having sex if you want it, but I’d be content just being with you. It doesn’t need a label if you don’t want one. If you even want it at all.”

George squeezes his eyes shut, waiting for the moment he’ll open them again and wake up to the realization he’s been dreaming. It never comes.

He’s scared to say yes for fear of... He doesn’t really know. It’s scary, scarier to change the nature of their relationship than it has been for any of his previous partners. Dream is so, so much more than just a potential romantic interest—Dream is George’s past, present, and future. He would’ve never been who he is without Dream or without his companionship, romantic or not. They’ve been tied together, by fate or not, he can’t say.

Things will be different. If they change their life-defining partnership in this sense, he can’t see a way to return back to what once was. It’s scary.

But George begs to believe it will be worth the risk.

“Okay.”

Dream physically deflates in his arms. George hadn’t realized just how tense Dream had grown in the minute or two he remained silent in thought. He didn’t realize how anxiety-inducing this must have been for Dream, as well.

“I... I want that. Want you,” George mumbles into his chest.

A large, warm hand cradles the back of his head, holding him close.

“I don’t want to name it anything just yet,” Dream confesses. “Just feel things out.”

Boyfriends is a word that jumps to George’s mind, but he holds his tongue. The urge to label Dream as *his* is so tantalizing. He values Dream’s opinion on the subject, though, so he tucks that thought inside his chest for later, once they’ve gone past more than just dipping their toes in the water.

“I’m fine with anything as long as it’s with you.”

Dream pulls back, tilts George’s head up so he can kiss his forehead. His grip around George is firm and solid, grounding like he needs. He doesn’t seem scared to hold George anymore. Dream is always careful with him, but he’s not treating George like he’s made of glass, something fragile and easy to break—Dream now kisses and touches and holds him like he’s real, but worthy of care.

The cold dares to seep in through the cracks in the windowsill, but it doesn’t reach them. The heat of their bodies and warmth growing inside George’s stomach keeps him perfectly content, snuggled up to Dream.

He thinks it’s a little funny when he grasps the series of events that happened. In the span of a day and a half, he got snowed in and stuck in a remote cabin with Dream, slow danced with him, had sex with him, and then confessed to him. It’s impressive how much happened in such a short amount of time, but he supposes it’s because everything has been building up for months, the culmination just arrived in a very peculiar way.

Lying here in Dream's arms, George remembers that they've still got a whole week ahead of them, a week to figure out what affection they like away from prying eyes. He's thankful that there's no signal, no audience to worry about as they test out the waters all on their own. It's scary, but it's exciting.

He's unsure of what this means for them going forward, but he knows Dream will always be the most unwavering, loyal presence in his life. He'll be right next to him.

They'll take it one day at a time.

My future is your future.

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